June / July, 1993 $ 3.95

The Beaver

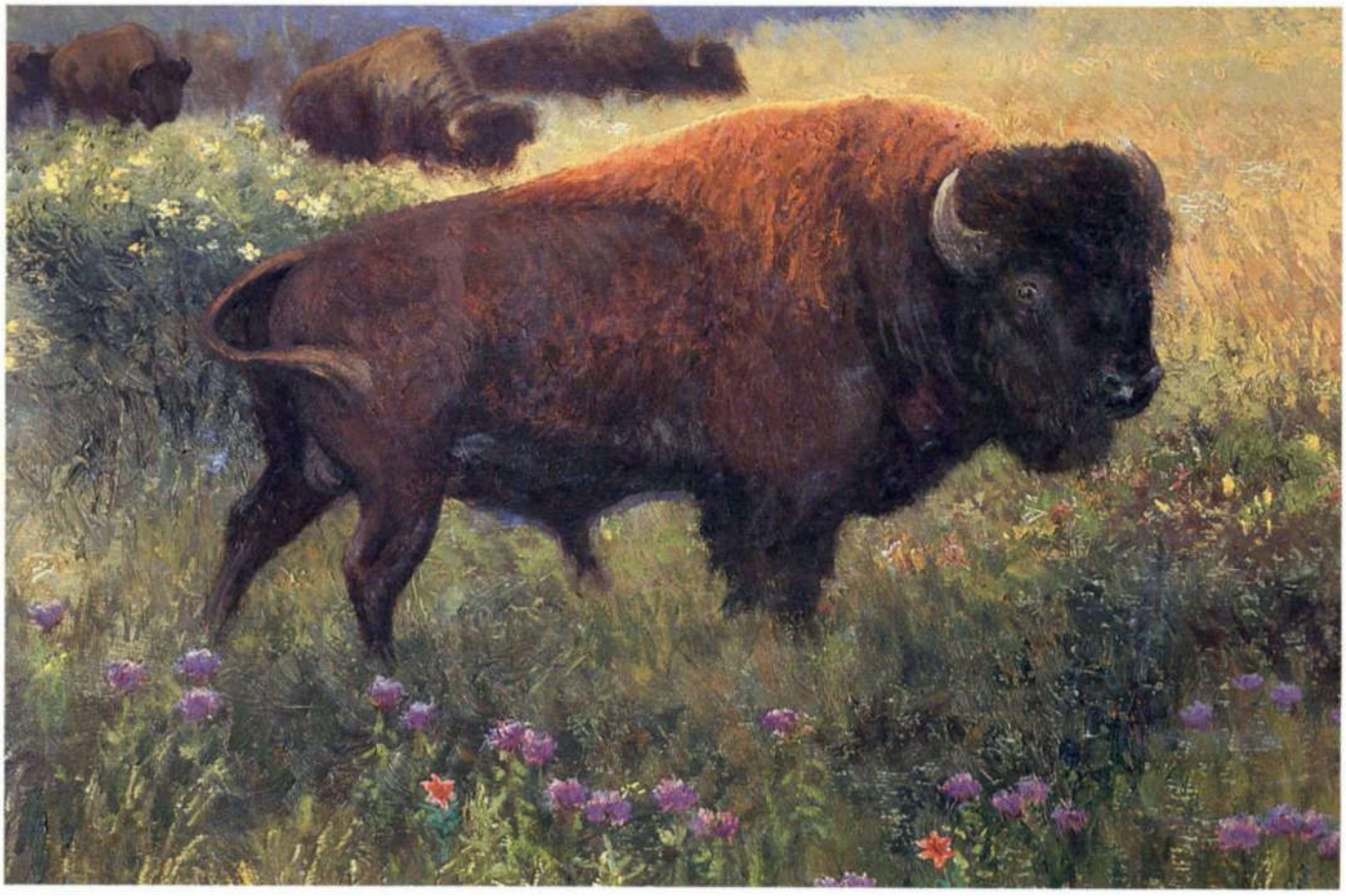
EXPLORING · CANADA'S · HISTORY

Where the Buffalo Roamed

Talking 'Canadian'

'Our Next Prime Minister !'

Regina's Day of Wrath



The Beaver

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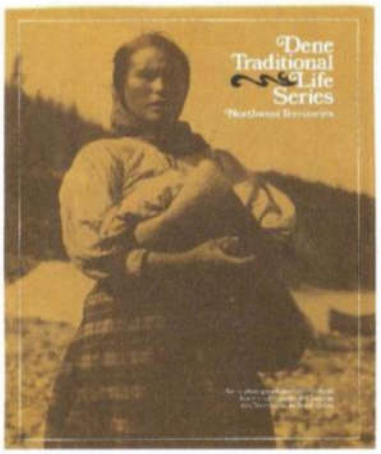

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A Question of Leadership

As Christopher Moore notes in his article "Our Next Prime Minister" beginning on page 32 of this issue of *The Beaver*, an increasing number of commentators are suggesting that this June's Progressive Conservative leadership convention in Ottawa to choose a successor to Brian Mulroney could be the last event of its kind.

The leadership convention has been a fixture of Canadian political life since William Lyon Mackenzie King astonished the nation by returning from exile in the United States to defeat the favoured William S. Fielding and become the successor to Sir Wilfrid Laurier at the Liberal Convention of 1919.

Other political parties swiftly adopted the American-style leadership convention and such events were soon regarded as the ultimate expression of democracy, even though many leadership conventions became little more than the public annointing of a candidate selected by powerful interests in the "back room".

With the advent of television, the selection of leaders became a national spectacle and the similarity to the process that selects American presidential candidates increased. This led inevitably to a certain amount of distortion and difficulty. As the years went by it became increasingly expensive for potential candidates to mount a leadership campaign and in recent times those seeking leadership positions have had to raise millions of dollars in order to stay in the race. Many losers have found themselves in serious financial straits and some winners have found themselves in debt of another kind as financial supporters called in the IOUs. Because of the financial horror, many worthy would-be candidates have abandoned their leadership aspirations and the country, as a result, may have lost a number of potentially effective leaders.

The "age of television" has also created problems for those seeking the leadership of a political party. The convention has evolved into an extravaganza in which the elements of showbusiness and serious debate contend. Increasingly, leadership hopefuls are judged on how they appear on television. Does the camera "like them"? Do they possess a convincing amount of charisma? Do they have a face that people will like? These and other considerations of the television age make some observers wonder how former leaders such as Macdonald, Laurier, King and Bennett would have fared if they had been forced to pass the television test before assuming leadership roles.

Further distortion can be created by imposing the trappings of a presidential system on a parliamentary democracy. The processes of selection tend to magnify the candidate until he or she assumes the larger-than-life status of a presidential contender. An American president is head of state and, as such, is not only the most powerful individual in the country, but a kind of symbol for the nation as a whole. A Canadian prime minister, on the other hand, is simply head of government, the chief politician, but the distinction between head of state and head of government tends to become blurred during and after the leadership selection process.

Have we come to set too much store by our prime ministers? After all, under our parliamentary system — which has been described as the worst system of government in the world, except for all the others — the prime minister is really just the person who leads the group with the most seats in the House of Commons. Even before there were political parties as such, interest groups in Parliament tended to form around powerful individuals and as the party system evolved it became the custom for members of the parliamentary caucus to select party leaders from among their number.

To some, this process seems undemocratic, although it could be argued that it is both democratic and practical. The Members of Parliament, after all, are elected by the people at large in regular general elections. The mandate supplied to Members of Parliament through the orderly electoral process could be said to empower MPs to act as proxies for the general public in the selection of Parliamentary leaders.

Members of Parliament are well placed to know who among them has the qualities of leadership required to represent party or national interests. The MPs know whom they are prepared to follow and when that leader loses their confidence they can act swiftly for removal, using the power extended to them by the electorate.

Under the present system, a leader — especially a leader who is also prime minister — can hang on long after the period of effective leadership has passed. A leadership convention must be called and a leader reluctant to step down can postpone the decision so long that the government's chances of re-election are seriously impaired. When the decision to resign finally comes, an expensive and time-consuming leadership campaign begins. Those who wish to simplify the sys-

tem and return it to what they see as its "ideal" state, argue that a leader chosen (and dismissed) by elected Members of Parliament would have been subjected to a more democratic process than the winner of a garish "popularity contest" at which wheeling, dealing and possibly even dirty tricks often count for more than sound policies and statesmanship.

By restoring leadership selection to elected Members of Parliament, it has been suggested, Canadians would also ensure that the men and women they send to Ottawa to represent them would regain some of the power that has been taken away from them over the years. With the mandate to review party leadership on an annual basis, even back-bench Members of Parliament would have a measure of power that is currently denied them. Ordinary MPs have been called "nobodies". If they are simply there to vote "yea" or "nay" as instructed, it is little wonder that the electors hold them in such low esteem. When they lost the power to combine to select leaders, they lost a large measure of their potency. So did those who voted for them.

The prime minister, even though it often appears otherwise, is not our head of state. A prime minister does not rule by Divine Right, although many prime ministers may have supposed that they were called to high office by the Supreme Being. Mackenzie King, for example, upon his elevation to the leadership of the Liberal Party in 1919, wrote in his diary, "I have sought nothing, it has come, it has come from God." One has a sudden vision of the King of Kings wearing a straw hat, holding a balloon and sporting a lapel button with the inscription, "I Like Willy". Many prime ministers, in fact, have carried on as if they had just that endorsement. A prime minister with living, empowered MPs sitting behind him on the rear benches would not make that mistake.

The idea of restoring power to the elected representatives of the people may not gain the support it requires to become reality. This is the age of "power to the people" and it is highly possible that the political parties, instead of restoring power to the elected representatives of the people, will look for means of getting more of the people themselves involved in the leadership selection process. A telephone vote by all card-carrying members of the party would be one method of involving everybody in the selection of a leader, although it has been suggested that it would be just as easy to swing the election of a leader with "instant" party memberships as it is to grab a nomination by bringing in crowds of new members by bus to swamp the nomination meeting.

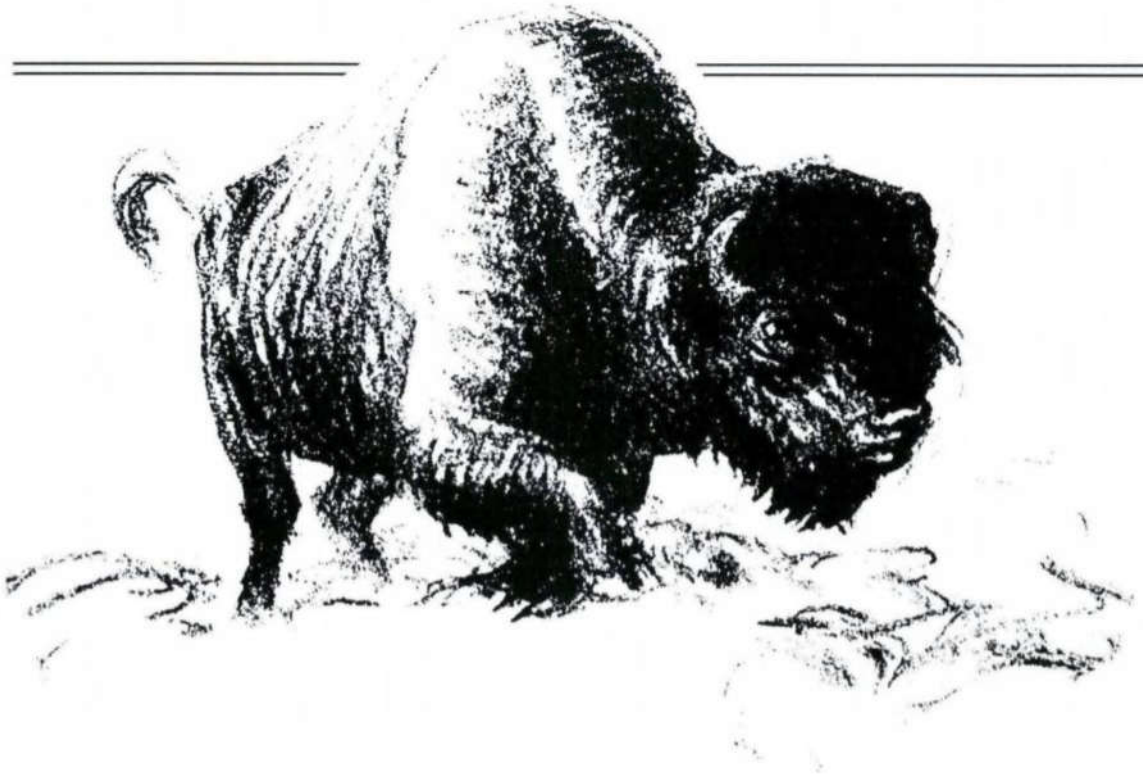
Perhaps the logic of caucus leadership selection is too subtle for our times. An all-inclusive leadership vote looks, on the surface at least, to be "more democratic". But is it really?

John A. Macdonald demonstrates some of the perils and difficulties of Canadian political leadership.

It has been suggested that if the parliamentary caucus was given the power to select and dismiss leaders, one result would certainly be instability in the political process. MPs, it is said, could use their power to blackmail the prime minister or they might contrive to oust a leader for reasons that have nothing to do with the good of the nation. The record shows, however, that many Canadian leaders have survived for long periods of time and it may be that Canadians, having found leaders they like, tend to stick with them. Macdonald, Laurier, Mackenzie King, Pierre Trudeau and Brian Mulroney all enjoyed long terms of party support. Losing leaders have tended to vanish rapidly, which is not surprising.

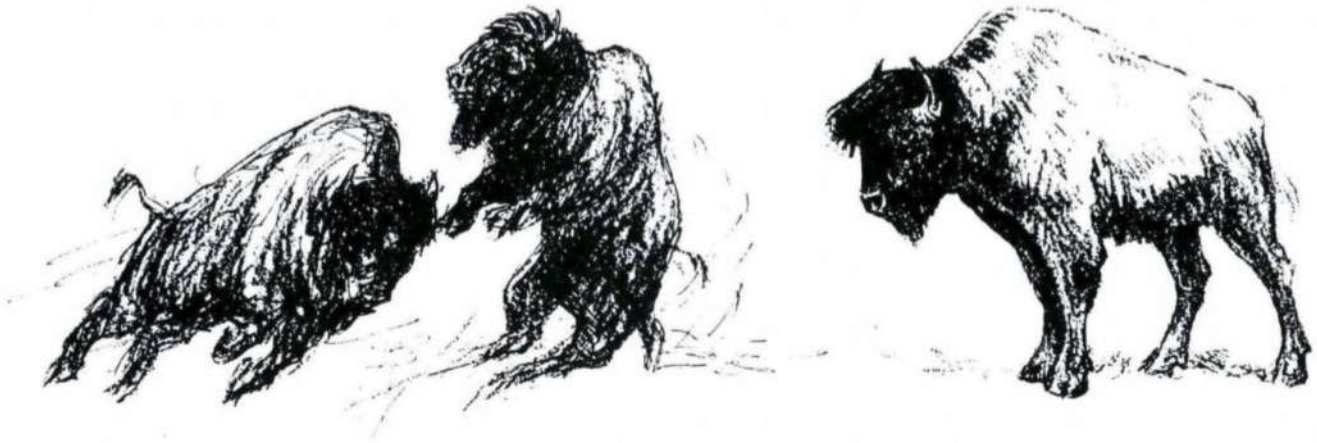
Whatever course is charted — back to old traditions of parliamentary initiative or toward new technologies of inclusion — the razzmatazz, balloon-blowing, cheerleader-led leadership convention appears to be on its way out. It was fun while it lasted, an entertaining rival to the Stanley Cup Finals, but it gradually became clear that it was not ideally suited to our needs. The country is looking for a better way.

— Christopher Dafoe



Days of the Buffalo

Text and Illustrations
By CLARENCE TILLENIUS



The buffalo herds that darkened the prairies were gone long before I was born. I did not believe that I should ever see buffalo in their thousands galloping over the plains. But the stories of the old days of the buffalo hunts and the buffalo millions so fired my spirit that I resolved that one day I would re-create some of those vanished scenes. I wanted to put on canvas these images which had lived in my imagination since I first saw a weathered old buffalo skull my brother lifted out of a muskeg in Manitoba's Interlake region where it had perhaps lain for over a century.

Vanished are the countless millions whose brown bodies once streamed over the rolling prairies in such numbers that for any person even momentarily to harbour a notion that they would one day be no more would have seemed the wildest of impossibilities.

Yet it happened. Stilled forever is the rumbling thunder of the pounding hooves as those wild free riders, the Métis of the Red River Plains, spurred their fleet-limbed buffalo horses in the wake of the galloping horde.

In my mind's eye it all lives again: the brown-coated shaggy beasts churning the trampled prairie; the sea of tossing heads and shining horns; the wild-eyed cows straining to keep their calves beside them in the jostling, rushing throng; the ponderous bounding of the big bulls, their massive heads swinging low ahead of the great humped shoulders while the bearded dewlaps sweep the earth.

Behind them come the black-eyed Métis hunters, swarthy faces glowing, their bright headbands, beaded moccasins and the buckskin leggings colourful splashes against the grey-green sagebrush and yellow grass, behind and around them a vast pall of yellow-grey dust rising slowly into the sky.

Could such a wild, pulse-quickening drama be witnessed today? No more the slaughter, no more, perhaps, the wild and colourful hard-riding Indian and Métis hunters. But in our great National Buffalo Parks I have stood in the path of the thundering herds stampeding towards me, buoyed up by the assurance of the park wardens: "Just show yourself in time. The herd will split and go right by you."

As the sea of horns and shaggy heads draws nearer, the awesome spectacle intensifies as the ground beneath the watcher's feet begins to vibrate under the pounding hooves. Then truly one can picture one's self unhorsed and afoot facing the on-rolling wall of destruction. The warden's comforting last words, "Show yourself in time, the herd will split," seem a dubious shield in the face of the oncoming brown juggernaut.

Yet it was true. Time after time I had only to step from concealment and an advancing herd would either split or — if I had showed myself too soon — the entire herd would veer off at a tangent and leave me snookered.

Such were the experiences while making the studies and drawings in preparation for creating the museum dioramas of the great Red River buffalo hunts of the 1850s, but even more satisfying were the hours and weeks spent simply observing the free-roaming buffalo going about their daily lives.

Here a group of cows and calves lie resting. One is surprised to see a pair of coyotes leaping here and there in the long grass, capturing mice almost under the noses of the recumbent cows who do not even cease placidly chewing their cuds.

The scattered waterholes throughout the parklands offer the artist opportunity to watch from concealment (having carefully noted the direction of the wind) as sometimes lone old bulls, sometimes groups of 5 or 6 younger animals approach to slake their thirst. But the really stirring spectacle is to see a great herd plowing through the marshes, a sight to transport one instantly back to the days of the Old West.

Again the sight of a solicitous cow with her newborn calf is a joy, but one can never be unheedful that the threat of danger to her precious offspring may turn that tender mother into a raging demon to be kept well clear of.

Man, of course, was the relentless, implacable destroyer: but until man came on the scene there were the ubiquitous buffalo wolves, the grizzly, and in the broken foothills the cougar to prey on the roving millions. These natural predators the buffalo could live with and flourish: but with the coming of European man came the doom of the buffalo millions.

Seeing the buffalo now in private holdings and in the great National Parks, though the herds may be now in thousands where once they were tens of millions, one still gets a nostalgic sense of what life was like on the plains in those far-off days.

Such themes, inspired several canvases: "Before the White Man Came", "The Prairies in Flower", "The Great Herd Comes to Drink" and "After the Ice Age".

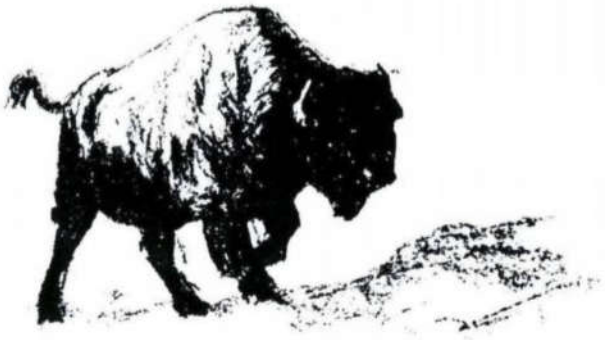
Scenes of violence and coming-violence are pictured too: "Cutting Out the Stragglers", "Perilous Pursuit", "Challenging the King", "Who Threatens My Child?" but these are the fabric of the lives of all wild animals, the rhythm of Nature under which we all exist.

For well over half a century the buffalo and the study of their times has been one of my treasured pursuits: the creating of these scenes of the Days of the Buffalo I hope to continue as long as I can wield a brush or pencil. ◆

Wildlife artist Clarence Tillenius created dioramas for major museums across Canada. An exhibition of his Canadian buffalo paintings opened on 1 June at The Provincial Museum of Alberta, Edmonton, and will be on view all summer.

"After the Ice Age": Bison migrating to North America through Kluane, Alaska, in pre-historic times.

"Before the White Man Came."

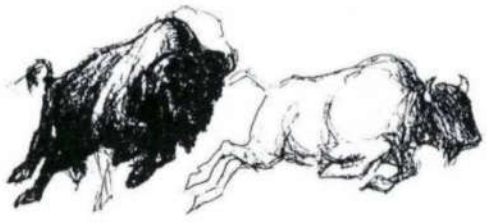


"Perilous Pursuit": hunting the bison on horseback.

Wolves cutting out the stragglers.

"Who threatens my child?"

"The Great Herd Comes to Drink."



"Challenging the King."

"Ox bow on the Assiniboine."

The prairie in flames, bison bursting through.

"Herd on Hillside."

"Moose on the Buffalo Marshes."

"They lived on these Prairies."

"Re-joining the Herd."

Regina's Day of Wrath

By John E. Stewardson

"Cyclone hits Regina. City in ruins."

That six-word message, received in the Winnipeg Telegraph Office shortly before five P.M. on Sunday, 30 June 1912, announced the most destructive cyclone in Canadian history.

Technically, according to the meteorologists, the storm which hit the city at ten minutes to five that day was a tornado. In Regina, it has always been popularly known as "the cyclone".

Crossing the centre of the city from south to north in a rampage that lasted fewer than six minutes, the cyclone left twenty-eight dead, hundreds injured, thousands homeless and over $5 million in property damage (about $75 million in 1993 dollars) — all in a city with a population of 30,000.

A little before 5 P.M., the Power House whistle blasted a warning to the citizens. This was just over five minutes from the time the cyclone had swept in across Wascana Lake between the Power House and the newly constructed Legislative Buildlings. Unfortunately, by the time the warning sounded, the storm was over, except for the accompanying torrential downpour that dumped over an inch of rain mixed with hail in the next half-hour or so. The rain had the beneficial effect of keeping the fires down.

Despite the fact that two or three tornadoes are reported in Saskatchewan every year, nothing approaching this magnitude of destruction has been seen since.

The damage done by the storm was concentrated along a narrow path through the centre of Regina between three and four hundred yards wide — barely three blocks — and nine blocks long. Within that small area, close to five hundred buildings were destroyed. The rest of the city remained virtually untouched.

On Smith Street, houses on the west side were unaffected to the extent that potted plants on open verandas were not even blown over. The houses on the east side of the street were reduced to rubble.

Lilian Vaux MacKinnon in an unpublished memoir notes that "The first indication for half the city — cyclones cut a narrow path, you know — was to see cars and firetrucks with the wounded making for the hospitals."

As it passed the Legislative Buildings, which were only lightly damaged, the cyclone sucked out all the examination papers for all Saskatchewan grade schools for the year. Throughout the province, teachers had to pass or fail their pupils on the basis of their recollection of how well they had done during the year.

As it swept across Wascana Lake headed for the centre of the city, the cyclone created a gigantic waterspout. The Boat Club House by the lake was demolished. All those who had sought shelter in it were severely injured and one was killed.

The Beelby family, at 2354 Smith Street, took refuge in their attic. The cyclone neatly tore if off the house and carried it with all its inhabitants over one hundred and fifty feet and deposited it in a neighbour's yard. None of the Beelbys, who climbed out a window, was hurt.

Four blocks further north, at 1947 Smith Street, the home of the Hodsman family, they were not so lucky. When the front wall of the house collapsed, three roomers and one of the Hodsman children were killed. Arthur Donaldson, one of those roomers, had been out walking his dog, a small, brown mongrel. He rushed towards the house as the storm roared up and was killed as it was reduced to rubble. The dog was blown past. After calm had returned, the dog came back to

Saskatchewan Archives Board

Lorne Street looking south, showing the Metropolitan Methodist church, the Y.W.C.A. and the Public Library. Citizens survey the damage after the storm.

the ruined house. He watched as the rescuers dug through the wreckage, then followed when the body of his master was taken to the Speers Funeral Parlours. From Sunday to Wednesday when his master was buried, the dog kept vigil. After that, he disappeared.

After destroying hundreds of houses as it rolled up Lorne Street, the cyclone destroyed Knox Presbyterian and the Metropolitan Methodist churches and tore the cupola off the Baptist church. Then the Regina Public Library, which had opened only one month earlier, had its roof taken off.

The Reverend Doctor James Falconer, visiting from Pine Hill College, Halifax, had preached in Knox church that morning. He "was sitting on an upstairs veranda and he suddenly called his hostess, 'I thought the Methodist Church was over there! Now I can't see it!' Absolutely demolished it was. And the parsonage to it."

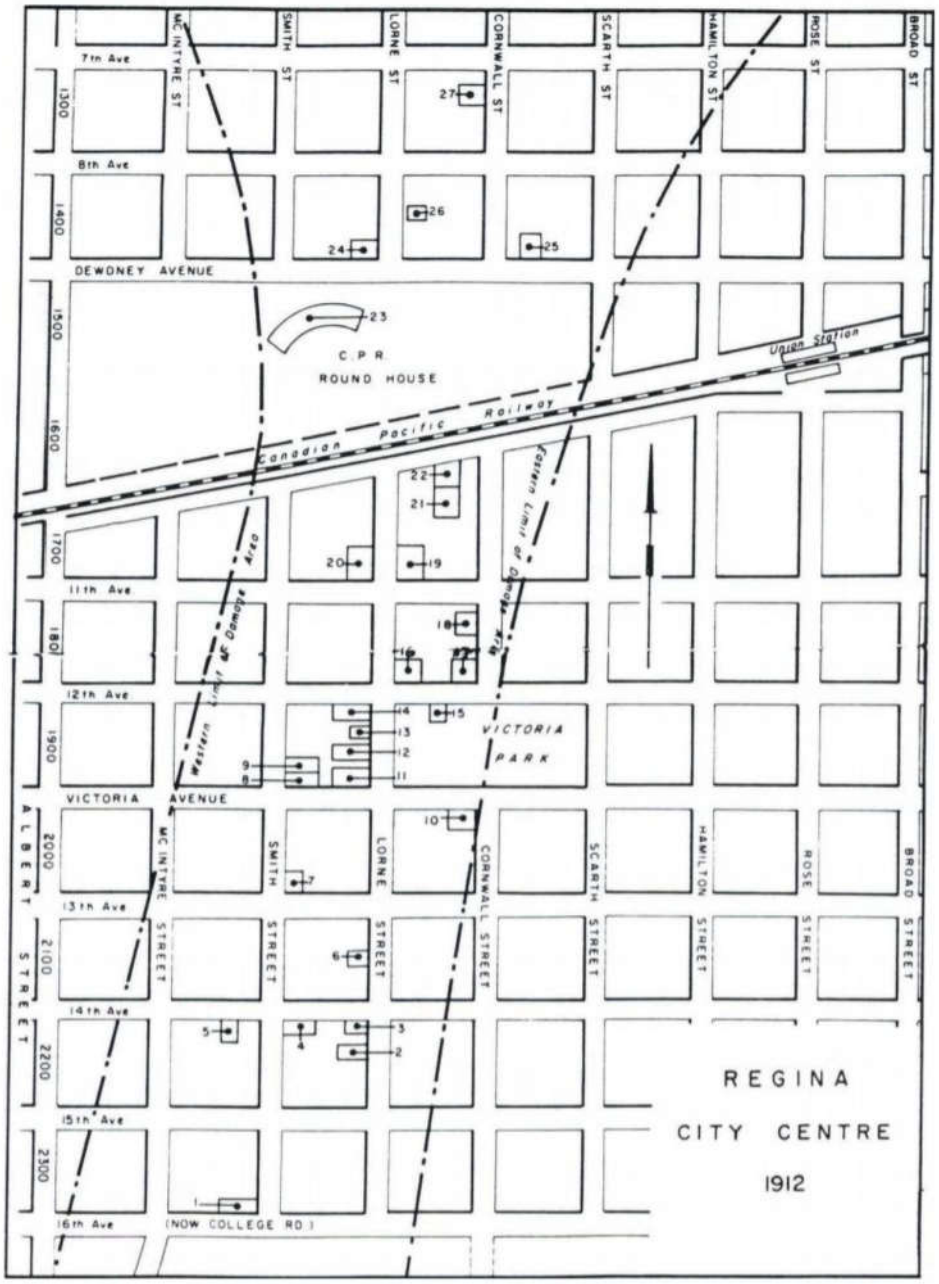
Perhaps the most poignant deaths were those of Frank and Bertha Blenkhorn. Married in England in early April, they had booked their wedding voyage on board the *Titanic*. But their wedding party went on so long, they missed its sailing on the evening of 12 April. However, they took a later boat and were in Regina on the afternoon of 30 June.

As Frank and Bertha walked across Victoria Park, the full fury of the cyclone hit. They were picked up and tumbled almost two hundred yards across Lorne Street. Their lifeless bodies were found between the destroyed Methodist parsonage and the now-roofless Carnegie Library.

The Telephone Exchange Building, at the corner of Lorne and Eleventh Avenue, was virtually destroyed. The roof was blown off and the south wall collapsed. Then the weight of the switchboard broke through the floor on the second storey, carrying three women and one man all the way down to the basement. None of them was seriously injured and they managed to climb out through a window. When they appeared at the offices of the *Regina Leader* to tell of their narrow escape, they were not believed. The reporters merely thought they wanted to see their names in print.

The mercantile and warehouse district from South Railway Street north to Dewdney received the full brunt of the storm. C.R. Delerue described the destruction: "Not only was one elevator laying across the tracks, but four more besides . . . [in] the railway yards . . . [there was] not a single car upon the tracks . . . a great brick warehouse on the other side of the tracks was missing."

Mrs. MacKinnon recalls "how devastatingly hot it was the week before. The heat seemed pitiless." When the storm hit, her sister and her husband's brother, Hugh, were guests. When Hugh returned after the



The Path of Death

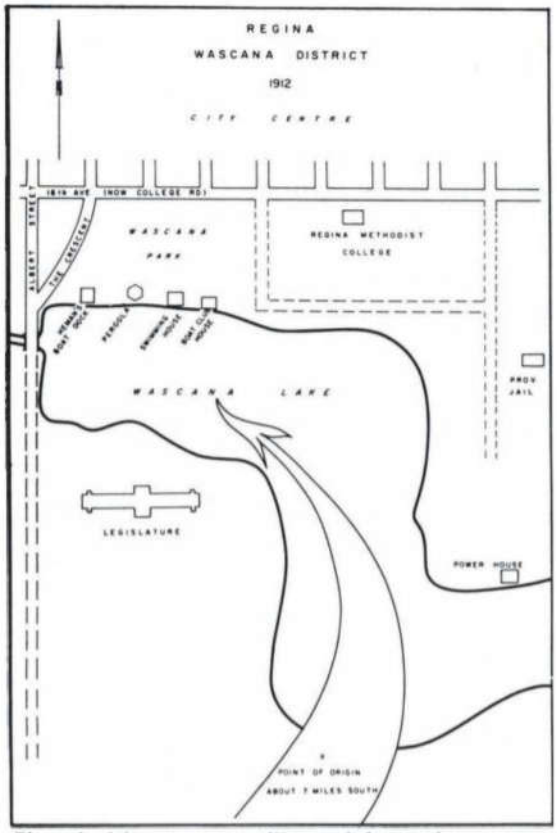
1. 2354 Smith Street: W. Beelby home.
2. 2220 Lorne Street: J. Hindson home, son, Fred, dies.
3. 2202 Lorne Street: Joseph Jack's Rooming House, Messrs. Boyd and Coffee die.
4. 2201 Lorne Street: Loggie Home, Mrs. H.N. Loggie dies.
5. 2318 15th Avenue: Paul McElmoyle home, Mrs. McElmoyle dies.
6. 2138 Lorne Street: Guthrie home, daughter, Etta, dies.
7. Smith Street: Mack Lee's Chinese Laundry, Ywe Boyuen dies.
8. Not identified.
9. 1947 Smith Street: Hodsman home, Mrs. McKay, her 3-year-old son, Lawrence Hodsman and Arthur Donaldson die.
10. Land Titles Office: minimal damage.
11. The Metropolitan Methodist Church: destroyed.
12. YWCA Building: damaged.
13. Methodist Parsonage: laid waste, bodies of Frank and Bertha Blenkhorn found between 13 & 14.
14. Regina Public Library: damaged.
15. 2320 12th Avenue: Mary Shaw dies.
16. Knox Presbyterian Church: heavily damaged.
17. YMCA Building: damaged.
18. 1821 Cornwall: Mah Chang Sing Laundry, Charlie Sand and Ye Wing die.
19. Telephone Exchange Building: building destroyed.
20. Donaghue Block: light damage, J.M. Scott dies.
21. South Railway: The Palace Livery, Robert Fenwick dies.
22. Warehouse of Tudhope Anderson, Joseph Bryan dies.
23. CPR Roundhouse: wrecked, G.B. Craven dies.
24. 1438 Lorne Street: Mrs. Laura McDonald dies.
25. Ackerman Building: wrecked.
26. 1435 Lorne Street: Mr. McDougall and his daughter, Ida, die.
27. Tent at back of a house on Cornwall between 7th & 8th, George Appleby dies.

Saskatchewan Archives Board

Eleventh Avenue looking west, a scene of terrible destruction.

Survivors sift through the rubble of heavily damaged homes on Smith Street.

Saskatchewan Archives Board



The path of the twister across Wascana Lake into the city centre.

storm, "he found [her] sister dazed on the veranda, trying to pack things strewn about into a trunk which had been in the attic."

Earlier, Hugh had run upstairs to close the windows at the sight of the approaching storm. "The window went from him as he touched it. All the windows were blown out. That's what relieved the pressure or the walls would have collapsed as in many homes. The roof went too. He saw it at the bottom of the block when he came to himself . . . he doesn't to this day know how he got downstairs. But the moment he was out of the house he was caught up and hurled away down the street."

Mrs. MacKinnon, her husband, sister, and two children had sheltered in their house initially, first by the bay window, later in the basement. When they emerged, "suddenly there was Uncle Hugh with his head all cut and we had to use Aunt Emma's petticoat for bandages . . . Petticoats in those days were long and frilly and very private. But she undid the belt and let it fall right down, and tore a strip."

C.R. Delerue was staying at the Clayton Hotel. At the approach of the storm, he had rushed to the top floor of the building to close windows. He observed "heaps of girls . . . in hysterics. The fellows were as white as ghosts. How I got down to the next floor, I don't know, but I did and found my way to the piano and played for all I was worth and drowned my fears."

Once the storm had passed, Delerue went out into the streets to chronicle the damage. "Pretty well every plate glass window in the city was broken, and the rain had just played Old Harry with the merchandise . . . the magnificent churches of the morning [were] in ruins . . . Knox Presbyterian church looks . . . just like an old English ruin.

"The YMCA and YWCA buildings, which were only recently opened, were terribly delapidated [*sic*] . . . Lorne Street . . . was . . . strewn with all kinds of goods, telegraph poles, trees, lumber, glass and parts of furniture and clothing."

On a walk the previous day, Delerue had admired the houses on Lorne, "one might almost call them mansions. . . Now there were seventy or eighty as flat as a pancake. There wasn't a post standing. . . It was impossible to recognize that houses had stood there."

Finally, he noted that "People were running this way and that, screaming. . . Other people were dragging the injured out. . . Soon . . . every available vehicle was pressed into service and they made for the hospitals with the injured."

Alerted by telegraph from Winnipeg — all the functioning lines from Regina led east — the first relief from outside was a train from Moose Jaw that arrived at the Exhibition Grounds around 7:15 P.M. loaded with doctors, nurses and medical supplies. A train from Winnipeg arrived early the next morning.

One of the first groups to respond to the need for financial assistance was a visiting American theatrical troupe, the Albini-Avolo Company, who were performing at the Regina Theatre. The troupe included a then-unknown Boris Karloff. The afternoon of the storm, they had been on a picnic out along Wascana Creek and were unaware of what had happened until they returned later that evening. They staged a benefit performance of the comedy *The Real Thing* in Regina. The following week, they donated half the proceeds from their performances in Saskatoon to the relief effort.

Before the cyclone hit, Regina had been readying itself for the next day's Dominion Day celebrations. After it, late in the evening, the Mayor, Peter McAra, issued a proclamation, "In view of the terrible happenings of today, I deem it my duty to declare all [celebrations] indefinitely postponed; I also request that all the bars of the city hotels remain closed for the day."

The mayor's order was duly carried out and 1912 became the only year in Regina's history with no Dominion Day celebrations. ♦

John E. Stewardson is a Toronto writer.

Upper Canada, 1793

SIMCOE AND THE SLAVES

By Patrick Bode

John Graves Simcoe

This year marks the 200th anniversary of a largely forgotten but significant event in Canadian history. It was in the year 1793 that the Assembly of Upper Canada (barely a year old itself) passed an Act "to prevent the further introduction of Slaves, and to limit the term of contracts for servitude." This Act, passed in an obscure colony in the heart of North America, was a first tentative step in ending the tyranny of slavery in Canada.

Significantly, the moving spirit behind the Act would be a black Canadian.

In March 1793, Peter Martin, servant of Colonel John Butler, appeared before the first meeting of the province's Executive Council at Navy Hall in Newark (now Niagara-on-the-Lake). Little is known of Peter Martin except that he was selected to represent the black citizens before the colonial government.

The Executive Council of the day was composed of the Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, Chief Justice William Osgoode and a prominent citizen and slaveowner, Peter Russell. This new executive was determined to create an orderly government among the Loyalists who had taken up land along the fringes of the American republic. Among these Loyalists were a number of black veterans, men who had escaped from slavery and volunteered to fight in Loyalist regiments against the revolutionaries. One veteran, Richard Pierpoint, had been born in West Africa and had been a slave in New York for 20 years. In 1780 he escaped, made his way to the Niagara Peninsula and joined Butler's Rangers. As a reward for his services he was granted land near Fort Niagara and settled in the area.

However, most blacks living in what was to become Ontario were condemned to slavery. Slavery of both blacks and natives had existed since the beginning of European settlement. French settlers at what eventually became Windsor, had used slave labour since 1749. Many Loyalists brought their slaves with them to Canada. An Imperial Act of 1790 encouraged immigration to Canada and assured prospective immigrants that their slaves would remain their property. The province's black population was therefore a peculiar mixture of black veterans who had been granted land for their services and slaves who were completely without rights or freedom.

Peter Martin was before the Executive Council to speak on behalf of the latter. He began by telling them of the violent outrage committed against a black woman, Chloe Cooley, near Queenston. Her master, one William Vrommond, had decided to sell her in New York State. Because she resisted, he had her securely bound and dragged across the border to her new owner. Simcoe was shocked, and the Council resolved to direct the Attorney General to prevent such breaches of the peace in the future. Nevertheless, both Simcoe and his Attorney General, John White, knew that under the existing law, Vrommond was within his

Royal Ontario Museum

"Minuets of the Canadians" by George Heriot. The black musicians could be slaves or Loyalist ex-slaves who had settled in the Canadas.

rights and that nothing could be done. But this would not dissuade Simcoe.

The Lieutenant Governor, John Graves Simcoe, was a distinguished military officer, but largely unfamiliar with civil administration. Yet he was determined to erect in the province a copy of the British form of government and root out the "democratic subversion" that had been at the heart of the American Revolution. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Simcoe had come to abhor slavery and he was one of the first imperial administrators to work for its abolition. While a member of the British House of Commons, Simcoe had spoken against slavery as an offence against Christianity. Given his own way, he would have freed all slaves immediately. The political realities of Upper Canada, however, intervened.

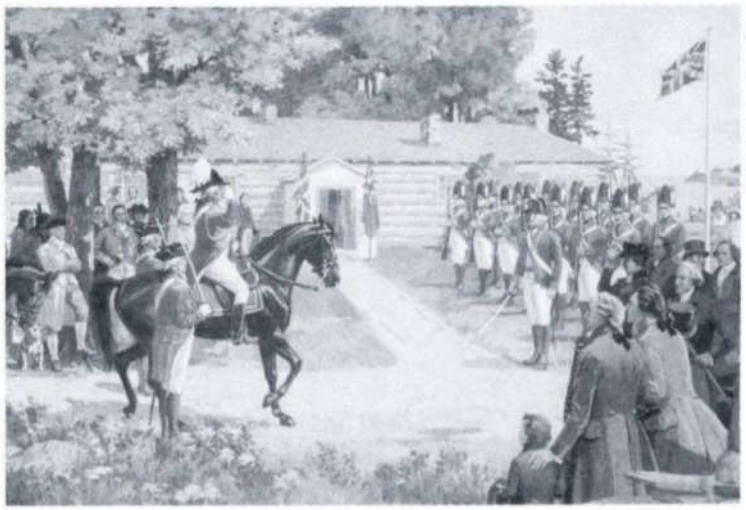
Simcoe's agent in the provincial Assembly, Attorney General John White, introduced a bill in June 1793 to provide for the gradual abolition of slavery. It was not well received. The elected members, many of whom were merchants or farmers who depended on slave labour, saw no need for emancipation. White later wrote that there was "much opposition but little argument" to his measure. On the Canadian frontier, hard labour was the only way to clear land or make it productive, and many settlers considered slaves to be their most valuable assets. After considerable concessions to the slave owners, the bill to provide for gradual abolition of slavery was passed and given royal assent on 9 July 1793. In his address to the Assembly, Simcoe praised this act as a "singular pleasure that such persons as may be in that unhappy condition which sound policy unites to condemn, added to their own protection from all undue severity... may henceforth look forward with certainty to the emancipation of their offspring."

Undoubtedly, Simcoe looked upon the act as the first step in the total elimination of slavery.

Yet the unfortunate reality was that it freed no one. All persons who were slaves would remain so until they died. However, no further slaves could be brought into the province, and all children of female slaves would become free at the age of 25. As a concession to slaveholders, the Act actually discouraged the freeing or manumission of slaves by requiring the master to provide security that the former slave would not become a public charge.

One member of the Assembly, D.W. Smith, was sympathetic to black Canadians and he did not think that the act went far enough. Smith wrote to a friend "We have made no law to free the Slaves.... A free man who is married to a Slave, his heir is declared by this act to be a slave. Fye, fye. The Laws of God & man cannot authorize it."

But there was no doubt that Simcoe's act was intended to throttle slavery. "By a piece of chicanery", wrote the wife of the Provincial Secretary, Simcoe had "freed all the Negroes." So unpopular was the act with slave owners that in 1798 a group of them headed by



Confederation Life, Toronto

The first Parliament of Upper Canada is opened by Lieutenant Governor Simcoe at Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), 17 September 1792. From a painting by J.D. Kelly.

the Virginia-born Christopher Robinson introduced a bill into the Upper Canada Assembly to permit the importation of additional slaves. As well, this act confirmed the Imperial Act of 1790 permitting immigrants to bring their slaves into the province. It is an indication of the strength of the slavery lobby that this bill passed in the Assembly, but was stalled by the government appointees in the Upper Chamber. This bill died at the end of the session, but the attempt to fully re-instate slavery in Upper Canada had almost succeeded.

Slavery persisted in Upper Canada after 1793. In the first decade of the nineteenth century there are many accounts of slave sales. Occasionally, people simply ignored the law and imported additional slaves from the United States. But the institution was doomed. In 1807, Sandwich merchant John Askin tried, without success, to sell his "Negro Man Ben". Askin noted that the hostility of the adjacent states to bondage was having its effect in destroying slavery as a viable enterprise.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century, references to slave transactions were rare. The end of slavery may have been hastened by the overwhelming loyalty of black residents during the War of 1812. A company of black Canadians was enrolled in the militia and served with great distinction throughout the war. When Imperial emancipation was finally enacted by London in 1834, there may have been no slaves left in the colony to be emancipated.

The Slave Act of 1793 stands as the only attempt by a Canadian legislature to act against enslavement. In typical Canadian fashion, it was a compromise affair and it had none of the drama of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. It was limited in effect, and intended to end a known evil gradually, not

Toronto Public Library

Peter Russell, slaveowner and member of Simcoe's Executive Council.

instantly. The preamble to the Act embodies this cautious approach:

> Whereas it is unjust that a people who enjoy freedom by law should encourage the introduction of Slaves; And Whereas it is highly expedient to abolish slavery in this Province, so far as the same may be done without violating private property.

Thus, one of Ontario's oldest laws expressed the ideal of freedom that free people could not enslave others, while at the same time it sought to preserve stability and protect existing rights. ♦

Patrick Bode practises law in Windsor, Ontario.

Talking 'Funny'

By J.A. Davidson

Several years ago the English comedienne Joyce Grenfell said this to a Canadian reporter: "A Canadian accent defies copying. It's a subtle blend of too many influences."

One of Irving Layton's early poems is about a native of Kingston, Ontario, who spent three years at Oxford University, and "Now his accent / makes even Englishmen / wince, and feel / unspeakably colonial."

A character in Kingsley Amis's novel, *The Egyptologists*, Buck Remus, a Canadian television "personality" working in London, is described as having a "floor-of-the-mouth Canadian voice."

Hugh MacLennan, who came from Nova Scotia, said in one of his essays that when he asked a pubkeeper in the Scottish Highlands how he guessed he was Canadian, he was told, "You are not English, that is certain, and you are not American. You still have some of *the* voice."

During World War II I met in London, England, a relative of a relative. In almost her first words to me she expressed relief that I did not have, as she put it, "a beastly Yankee accent." I did sense, though, that my flat prairie speech caused her some discomfort.

David Crystal, a British — actually Welsh — expert in language, in his little book, *The English Language* (Penguin, 1988) said this about Canadian speech: "To British people, Canadians may sound American; to Americans they may sound British. Canadians themselves insist on not being indentified with either, and certainly there is a good deal of evidence in support of this view."

Do we who have grown up in Canada have a distinctive way of speaking English? Can we generally be identified by others as Canadians because of the way we speak? Or is Canadian speech merely a variety of what has been conveniently called "General American"? General American, the most widespread mode of speech in the U.S.A., prevails, generally, in New York State west of the Hudson, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the states of the Middle West and the Far West.

General American is heard everywhere in Canada. It comes at us through television and radio and film. And we know that there are many similarities between General American and what can be called "General Canadian" — a way of speech that prevails from coast to coast, with a few significant regional variants.

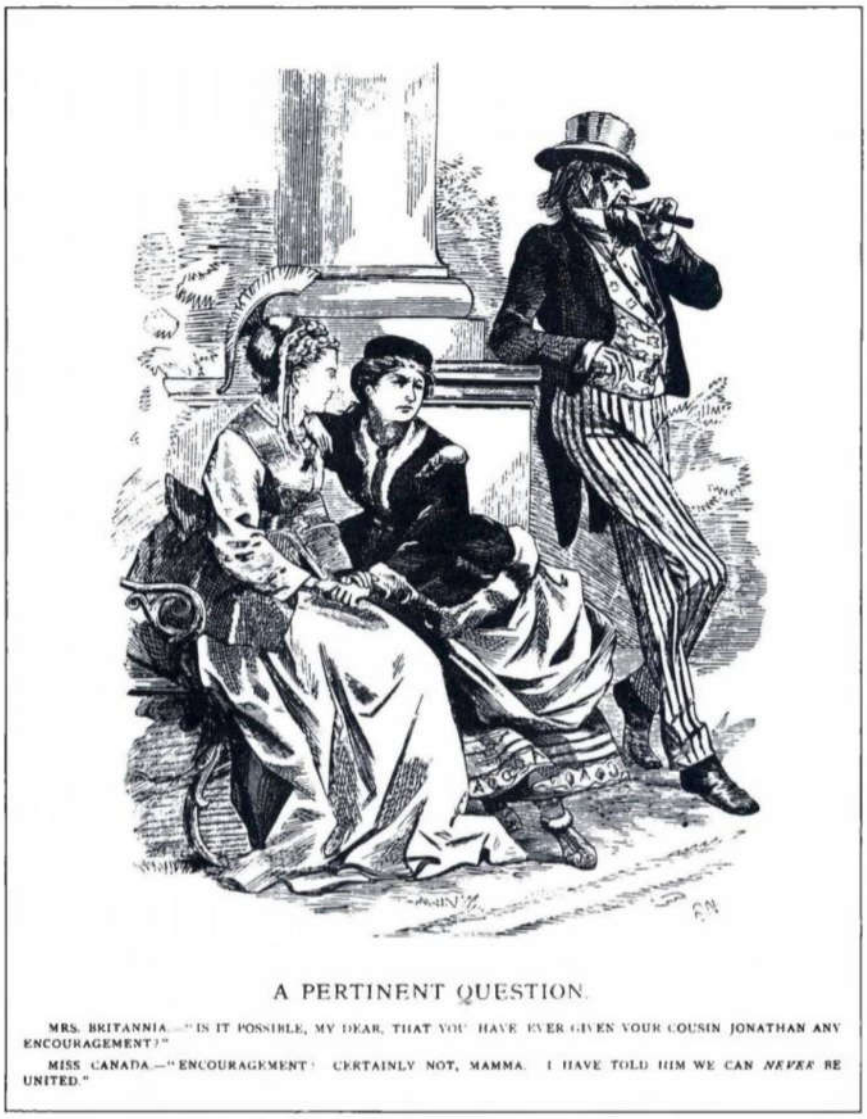
Mario Pei, of Columbia University, New York City, underscored the obvious when he wrote this: "The English of Canada sounds far more like an American than a British dialect." He suggested that Canadian speech differs from the American only in a few "Britishisms" in usage and pronunciation. I think his ear failed him. The late Walter Avis, a leading Canadian authority, was, I think, much sounder when he said that Canadian English "is neither American nor British, but a complex different in many respects from both in vocabulary, grammar and syntax — *and pronunciation*."

If you listen carefully you can, in most instances, distinguish between General American and General Canadian. There are subtle differences in intonation and rhythm, and there are several not terribly subtle differences in pronunciation.

We native Canadians, by and large, sound every *r* that can be sounded. We do not roll them in the Scottish way, but we — most of us, anyway — sound all of them. And we are inclined to be suspicious of native Canadians who fail to sound all their *r*s, particularly those at the ends of words. We feel that they are deliberately Englishing or Harvarding their tongues to show that they are more cultured than us ordinary Canadians.

Some Americans sound every *r*, but most of them miss a few, either in the middles of words or at the ends. Compare the speech of Lloyd Robertson and Pamela Wallen with that of their American counterparts: listen carefully.

The distinctively Canadian mode of speech had its beginnings in the early settlements of English-speaking people in the Maritime provinces, Quebec's Eastern Townships, and old Ontario. Many of the settlers were



A PERTINENT QUESTION.

MRS. BRITANNIA.—"IS IT POSSIBLE, MY DEAR, THAT YOU HAVE EVER GIVEN YOUR COUSIN JONATHAN ANY ENCOURAGEMENT?"

MISS CANADA.—"ENCOURAGEMENT! CERTAINLY NOT, MAMMA. I HAVE TOLD HIM WE CAN *NEVER* BE UNITED."

From the earliest days Canadians "felt different", as this cartoon from "Diogenes" for 18 June 1869 indicates.

of English background, but much of the early settlement was Scottish, and there was a notable Irish element. Scottish and Irish speech provided much of the foundation of what was to become General Canadian. On the other hand, early American speech was influenced more by the English of England, with its gradual loss of *r* as a consonant, particularly at the ends of words.

The consistently sounded *r* prevails in Canada, and there is no indication that either the pressure of General American or the prestige of the Standard English of England will shake it loose from the vast majority of English-speaking Canadians.

Canadian speech has sharp, short vowel sounds — on the whole, sharper and shorter than those in General American. Our *ou* diphthong is a conspicuous example of this. It is the sound that Americans seem to have in mind when they tell us that we "sure do talk funny"; they find it a quaint, backwoodsy sort of thing.

Some years ago Walter Pidgeon told readers of a Canadian magazine that when he first went from his native New Brunswick to New York to seek fame and fortune on the stage he found that he was somewhat handicapped by his Canadian accent. He said he had difficulty with words such as *about* and *mouse*. I can see the young Walter Pidgeon standing in front of a mirror in a New York theatrical boardinghouse, saying again and again, "Not 'mouse', you peasant — 'mayouse'."

H.B. Woods, an expert in Canadian English, says that about six per cent of the vowel sounds in Canadian English differ from those in General American. He

Walter Pidgeon (or should that be "Walder"?) with Roddy McDowell in the 1941 Hollywood film "How Green Was My Valley".

mentions, of course, the notorious *-ou-*, and the ways in which we say words such as "bite" and "nice" and "wife" and "point" and "voice". And he discusses the "rounded" Canadian vowel in "body" and "doctor" and "water".

There are other vowel sounds which distinguish Canadians from Americans. Many, perhaps most, Canadians say "instityootion", whereas Americans say "institootion". And there are "prodyooce"/"prodooce", "styoopid"/"stoopid", and others of that nature. Many Canadians, however, tend to take the American way here. Some of us now refer to the Queen's husband as "the *Dook* — with the sound as in "spook". Then there is the "executiv"/"executeeve", "negativ"/"negateeve" thing.

We Canadians tend to be a little fussier than Americans with sounding the *t*. Many Americans give the *t* in the middle of words almost a *d*-sound. I have heard very able American broadcasters say "eighdy" and "idendical" and "congradulations" (I wonder if Mr. Pidgeon came to call himself "Walder".)

In some words Americans underplay the *t* almos' to the point of extinction. Last year I heard a political candidate in an American state say on television, "cosly programs" ("progr'ms", that is). And with many of them the last day of the week has become "Sa'erday" — but then it has become that with many Canadians.

This, of course, is a rather inadequate analysis. There are Americans who sound every *r*. And some are very fastidious with the *t*. There may even be some who say "mouse" the way I do. And there are many Canadians whose ways of speaking seem to refute this analysis. But consider these factors together, along with American intonations and speech rhythms, and you will have to admit that a reasonable case can be made for the existence of a distinctively Canadian way in speech that is not simply a variant of General American.

Within General Canadian there are regional and other distinctive styles of speech. (Newfoundland is a special case. I do not wish to discuss Newfoundland speech here. No mainlander can discuss Newfoundland speech with impunity.)

The Maritimer can generally be identified as such by certain speech characteristics, many of Scottish origin. A friend suggested to me in a letter many years ago that there is a General Bluenose accent, with several sub-accents within it. He wrote: "Though the people in the south and west ends of Halifax speak my own impeccable English, there is in the north end a particularly unpleasant accent — 'hid' for head, 'new-erth' for north — which sounds like that of a Bronx telephone operator."

He also told me that on Grand Manan Island, off the south coast of New Brunswick, a U.S. southern accent prevails. He once heard a man there say, "Wot with the dowg bahkin, an ma wife grawlin, a man don't hahdly git no wuk done no haow." Several years later I spent a week on Grand Manan, and I was delighted to hear the soft speech of the natives, reflecting, in their relative isolation for nearly two centuries, the speech of their ancestors who had come up from the Carolinas during the American Revolution — speech modified by undertones of Bluenose.

The Maritimes are rich in regional overlays. Scots-Irish vowels are prevalent in many parts. In Lunenberg, Nova Scotia, there is still a trace of the German. It is one of the pleasing little ironies in Canadian history that, as the historian A.R.M. Lower put it, "These Germans, who early lost their language, are virtually the oldest English-speaking Canadians."

Ontario speech has, generally, a slight nasal tone. In southwestern Ontario Canadian speech tends to come quite close to General American, although not in all areas. It is interesting to hear a man from, say,

Illustrated London News

The Irish made a solid contribution to the development of Canadian speech. Here Irish migrants prepare to leave Cork for the long sea journey to Canada.

Chatham, and of impeccable United Empire Loyalist background, speaking in the manner of a son of the American Revolution whose family helped open up Ohio.

The Ottawa Valley has a mode of speech which seems to mix dilute Irish with a trace of Yankee twang. Just south of it, in Lanark County, some of the older people have a way of speaking which I have heard described as "Scotch-with-a-lot-of-water."

Prairie people generally speak similarly to their Ontario cousins, but with less of the nasal tone and with a characteristic flatness. And they tend to enunciate more crisply.

Most Canadian-born-and-raised people in British Columbia speak like prairie people: many of them are transplants from the wide open spaces. But there are some interesting overlays of accent, such as the one of some of the natives of Vancouver Island which I have heard called, among other things, "The Duncan Mumble" and "The Oak Bay Blether". These seem a strange mixture of Winnipeg and Oxford.

A few special accents have been precipitated as overlays on General Canadian. In Toronto there are two interesting sub-accents which perhaps can be labelled "Toronto Tough" and "Toronto Dainty". Toronto Tough is a sort of Canadianized Brooklynese, but it lacks the crude charm of the original. An obvious example of this is, "Howja like Trawna?".

Toronto Dainty is genteel: it rings of Establishment, with a capital "E". It is Canadian, all right, but some of its practitioners seem to be hinting in their speech that they do wish they had gone to a good school in England. A curious throatiness creeps into certain words: you hear this when a Dainty Torontonian says *Toe-rawn-teau*.

Dainty accents have been identified in other parts of Canada. We had a few of them in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, when I was boy there many years ago.

In academia a mode of speech similar to Toronto Dainty has become rather common. I have been told that this seems to be spreading, particularly among younger scholars in the humanities. Similar to it is the speech of some of our diplomats and loftier federal public servants — which an insider told me some years ago may go with the hanky-up-the-sleeve gambit.

Most of the Canadian military speak ordinary General Canadian, but some of them cultivate "just-ever-so British" overlays. A few of our naval officers, Canadian born and bred, have felt impelled to RN their voices a little. Some of our soldiers have been known to affect a touch of what has been called "the Sandhurst Snarl", which, when put on top of basic Manitoba, for instance, becomes rather amusing. For a few years after the war some of our airmen indulged in the "RAF Ruffle", in which haws and huffs, strained through bushy moustaches, tended to muffle some meaningful sounds: now the trend among our flyers seems to be towards the American.

Observers have detected among the clergy of Canada a tendency to affect a touch of pious toniness in their speech. When a Canadian parson feels that he really must improve his pulpit voice he may become a little careless with his *r*s and give some of his *a*s a genteel broadening. When excited he may utter hooting tones. Chestiness in pulpit-speech perhaps comes from the inhaling of too much of the dust of old hymnbooks.

This group of nineteenth century Scottish settlers on Cape Breton Island brought their way of speaking to help add the colours of tartan to the evolving "Canadian language".

Still relevant is a statement made many years ago by Stephen Leacock: "I myself talk Ontario English; I don't admire it, but it's all I can do; anything is better than affectation." (Leacock said that in Canada we use "English for literature, Scotch for ceremony, and American for conversation.")

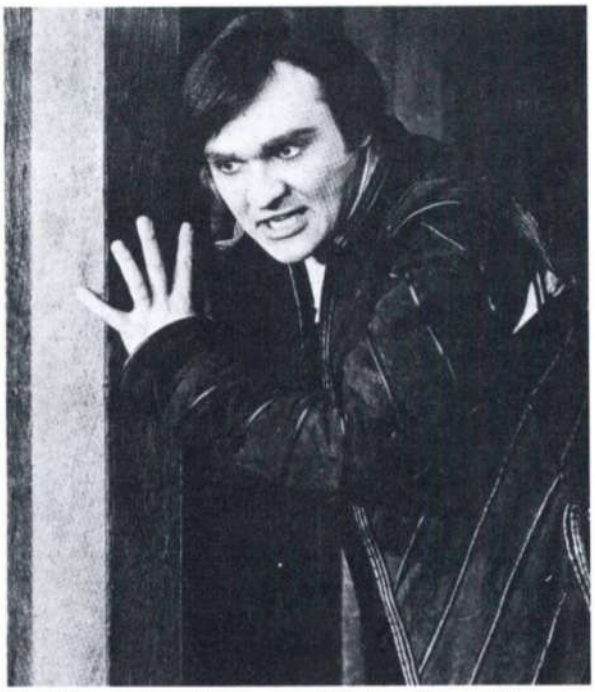
Will a distinctively Canadian mode of speech prevail? Henry Sweet, a pioneer in spoken-English studies — said to have been Bernard Shaw's model for Henry Higgins in *Pygamalion* — pointed out that a spoken language is "necessarily a vague and floating entity." It is impossible to predict in which direction, or directions, General Canadian will float — but surely a little guessing is not beyond us here.

Will General Canadian float in the direction of General American until it is absorbed by it? Some experts think that the absorption process is well underway. There can be no doubting that many features of American speech have spread into Canada and probably will continue to spread. But will this necessarily lead to absorption? Changes, of course, will take place in Canadian speech, but perhaps basic Americanization has now gone about as far as it is going to go. Our grim determination to sustain the Canadian identity, with a certain vagueness as to what that actually is, will have much to do with the further development and preservation of a distinctively Canadian mode of speech.

Mind you, there are Canadians — some of whom are competent in linguistics — who think it will be almost a miracle if the distinctively Canadian mode of speech, one quite distinct from General American, survives the next fifty years. To such people I point out that if they wish to talk linguistic miracle they can do no better than consider the miracle that has already taken place, the survival of distinctive Canadian speech during these past fifty years, in which we have been subjected to the constant pressure of General American through radio and television and film.

The first generation to have been raised on television is now sliding into middle age, and there is no convincing evidence that, by and large, its tongues have been Americanized. Our three oldest children are now in their forties, and they talk funny, just like their parents.

Will General Canadian, then, float in the direction of the Standard English of England, the so-called "Received Pronunciation"? This is the mode of speech we conveniently, if not completely accurately, labelled Oxford or BBC English.



Canada's actors have also played a role in the evolution of "the Canadian language". Here Kenneth Welsh plays Hamlet in "Canadian" at the Stratford Festival in the 1960s.

CTV

"General Canadian" owes much to the careful speakers of radio and television. Lloyd Robertson of the CTV network has been an exemplar of good Canadian speech.

Some Canadians do seem to be trying to give it a gentle shove in that direction. I have been told that a little of that kind of shoving is done in some of our private schools. Such efforts have not been notably successful, but a few of the victims take on just a touch of the British accent and seem to suggest by their way of speaking that although they are Canadians they rather disapprove of the ways in which most of their compatriots speak.

I must now confess that all varieties of spoken English the ones I find most pleasant to listen to are those of soft-voiced, well-educated Scots and English — although when they become shrill or snobbish or sarcastic they arouse in me homicidal feelings more rapidly than any other modes of speech.

I do not think that Canadian speech will float very far in the direction of Oxford and the BBC. This may bother the English woman who said, in a ruling-class accent, that it distressed her that Canadians do not even *try* to speak "proper" English.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, through both television and radio, and the Canadian Television Network (CTV) are primary agencies in the maintenance of General Canadian. In their news and public affairs departments they effectively present a clean, clear Canadian mode of speech, uncluttered and generally free of affectation. But those two corporations work both sides of the street: perhaps the greatest threat to General Canadian is in American television, which both of them help make so readily available to us.

My prediction is that Canadian speech will continue to float in its own special channel and that for the foreseeable future we Canadians will continue to talk funny. ◆

J.A. Davidson, a retired minister of the United Church of Canada, lives in Victoria. He has no academic qualifications in linguistics, but for about forty years he has dabbled in and written about Canadian English.

Mother Tongue

"I can see no reason why we in Canada, when we have developed a style of our own, should not describe ourselves as using an English vocabulary, but a Canadian language."
— **B.K. Sandwell, 1920.**

"Already I speak the both languages, English and Ukrainian."
— **Anon., a new Canadian, 1940s.**

"Please tender my regards to all the citizens of Canada. Tell them they all sound like Randolph Scott. They do not say "house" or "mouse", they say "hoose" or "moose". I love it. And I think they are taller than Americans, they are kinder and they are more gentle."
— **Mel Brooks.**

The Tropic of Ellesmere

By Dave McIntosh

Lake Hazen is 45 miles long, 7 miles across at its widest and sits at 82° north latitude, making it the largest fresh-water lake in the world that far north. It is 90 miles southwest of the defence and weather station at Alert on the north coast of Ellesmere Island.

There are some odd things about Hazen. The Ruggles River which flows out of it does not freeze over in its first half-mile, though the temperature may be −68.5°F. as it was on 4 January 1958. The broad valley surrounding the lake is extraordinarily dry; there are few storms, but when there is one in winter sand blows with the snow. It was once tropical: fossils of tropical ferns and coal deposits have been found. Archaeologists have discovered the remains of 33 occupied sites dating from as early as A.D. 950. There was a sharp climate change about 1300. Ice borings 300 feet deep in the nearby icecap and glaciers have brought up ice which fell at Hazen as snow early in the fourteenth century.

Being inland, Hazen was off the beaten track for explorers until 30 April 1882, when Adolphus Washington Greely, leader of the U.S. Lady Franklin Bay Expedition, sledged up the Ruggles River from Chandler Fiord. Other expeditions passed that way in 1900, 1905, 1909, 1915 and 1935; none was Canadian, of course. Other countries, especially the United States, always took a keener interest in the Canadian Arctic than Canadians and Ottawa governments co-operated splendidly by giving them, especially the Americans, anything they asked for — landing rights, air base, weather station, radar line, whatever.

The U.S. Corps of Engineers built the bases at Resolute, Southampton Island, Frobisher, Chimo and Churchill and the U.S. Weather Bureau built the arctic stations at Alert, Eureka, Mould Bay and Isachsen. Only Goose Bay was Canadian-built, and it is hardly arctic.

When the Cold War came along the U.S. wanted bomber, fighter and tanker plane bases on Ellesmere and at Clyde River on Baffin Island to complement its big base at Thule, Greenland. It didn't take long before it was casting its eye on Lake Hazen where landing strips could be easily laid down on ground or ice. A Lake Hazen establishment could be supplied by sea from Chandler Fiord; moreover, Alert could be supplied overland from Hazen. The weather at Hazen is nearly always better than at Alert and Eureka.

The U.S. Air Force landed on the ice at Hazen in 1955 and again in 1956, on the latter occasion allowing two Canadian military officers to go along. The American survey team found three suitable landing sites for B-47 nuclear bombers and KC-97 air tankers.

Meanwhile, Trevor Harwood, a burly and rumpled arctic veteran, was combatting within his federal department, National Defence, the huge indifference to growing U.S. encroachment in the North and the issue of Canadian sovereignty.

Harwood was head of the Arctic (later mundanely renamed Geophysics) branch of the Defence Research Board, since dissolved, but then a vital arm of the defence department, from 1956 to 1972. Even before he led the section he had been urging the department to build airstrips in the high Arctic to support exploring and scientific expeditions and thereby back up claims to sovereignty. The official departmental attitude was: the Americans let us use Thule and that is all we need.

Harwood had arctic credentials. In 1934, at age 20, he signed on as a clerk with the Hudson's Bay Company, discovering too late, as he afterwards cheerfully related, that he had mistaken the annual for the monthly salary. He spent two years at Dundas Harbour, Devon Island, and three at Pangnirtung, Baffin Island. He made extensive sledge journeys, one of them across the Devon Island icecap from Dundas Harbour to Craig Harbour, Ellesmere Island. He paused for five years to go to war in the Canadian Navy and four more to graduate in geology from the University of Toronto, joining the Defence Research Board's Arctic branch in 1949.

Department of National Defence

Hazen Camp from the lake, May 1958.

When the Distant Early Warning radar line was built across the Canadian Arctic in the early 1950s, Harwood picked and surveyed many of the sites, being dropped alone in mid-winter by ski-equipped plane miles from nowhere. He always maintained that caribou hides, no matter how rank, were better protection against the elements than any sleeping bag; he bought his at an HBC store. One summer he canoed around Cornwallis Island with two colleagues; the island had once before been circumnavigated — in 1845 by Franklin's *Erebus* and *Terror*.

Despite the defence department's (and government's) policy (unannounced) of leaving the Arctic to the Yanks, Harwood kept plotting how to put a Canadian expedition into Hazen. He finally succeeded by seizing on the 1957 International Geophysical Year. Operation Hazen was organized principally by Harwood — he was a superior staff officer as well as an accomplished man in the field — with his friend Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith, known to all as "The Hat", in charge on site. Twenty scientists participated and four of them remained the entire year, from August 1957, to August 1958. We shall return shortly to the winter stay.

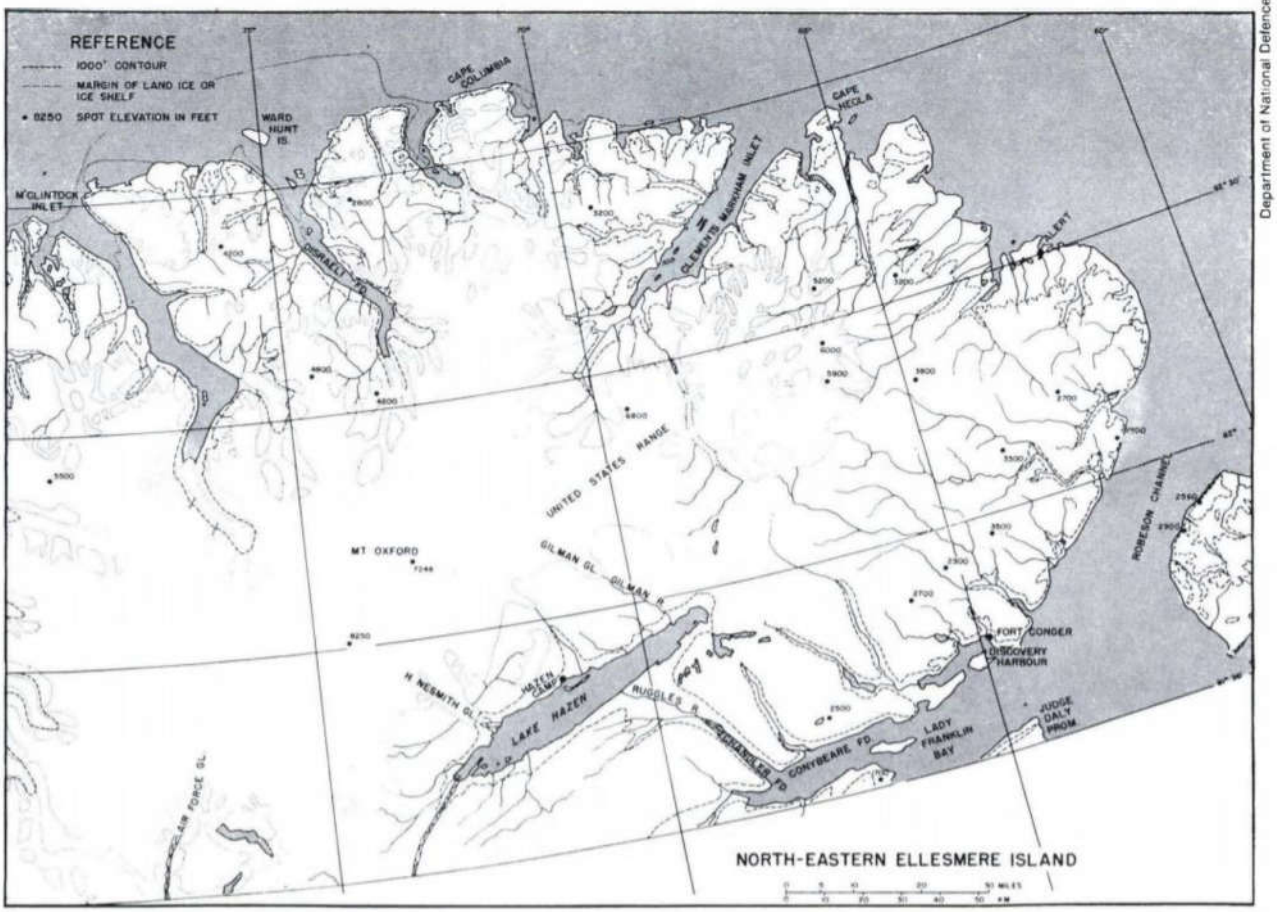
The expedition was so successful that Harwood was able to keep teams on Ellesmere in subsequent years. In Operation Tip Top in 1959, he showed that Alert could be supplied through Hazen without reliance on Thule. A detailed list of instructions by Harwood for the Tanquary Fiord expedition on Ellesmere in 1963 has survived and demonstrates his skill and persuasive powers in assembling 97 different types of equipment from various sources, military and civilian. He never seemed to overlook a single piece of gear whether signal flare, barograph, compass, anenometer, crampons or beeswax thread for mending. He fretted constantly about the safety and welfare of his teams in the North. Not one member of any of his expeditions ever suffered a severe injury; none was ever an emergency evacuee.

Harwood retired in 1972, unsung except by his friends, and died at age 70 at Mississauga, Ontario, on 8 October 1984. He asked that his ashes be scattered at Dundas where his arctic life had begun a half-century earlier.

The establishment of the Lake Hazen camp was accomplished in 1957 by an airlift comprising ten landings by Royal Canadian Air Force C-119 Flying Boxcars. Two 16x24-foot shelters of insulated canvas stretched over wooden frames were constructed on the north shore of the lake. A glaciological camp was set up a few miles away on Gilman Glacier at 3,400 feet with a C-119 airdrop and three landings by a ski-equipped DC-3 Dakota.

The 1957 summer team was relieved in mid-August by the four-man winter party which arrived at the head of Chandler Fiord, with supplies, in the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Eastwind*. The scientists ranged far and wide during 1957-58, often using the two dog teams brought with them. More than 100 species of flowering plants were collected, including poppies found at 5,000 feet.

The winter team comprised geographer C.R. Harington, the leader; meteorologist C.I. Jackson and geographers J.M. Powell and D.I. Smith, all from McGill University, Montreal. They stayed the next spring and summer too, and their year-long record of



weather observations was the first of its kind for an inland station north of the Canadian mainland; the six weather stations in the Arctic archipelago are all near the coast.

Luckily, Harington's diary-like monthly reports for the 1957-58 winter have survived in the National Archives where I ran across them while researching the record of Canada's arctic kowtowing to foreigners. Because the same subjects often recur monthly, I have re-assembled Harington's hand-written notes by subject to save space (and patience).

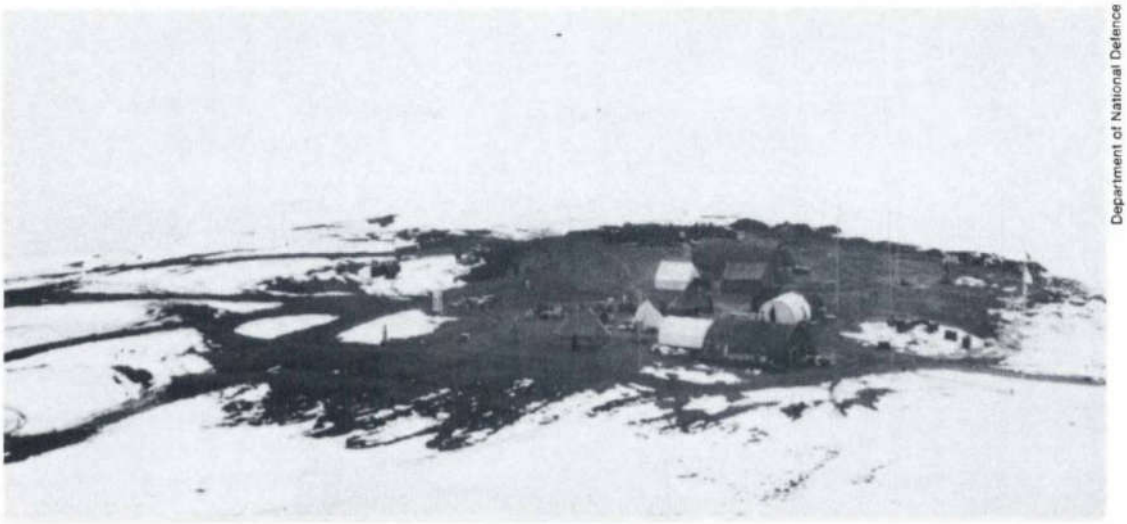
Living conditions: Radio contact with the outside world was lost on 18 September and was never restored throughout the winter. This caused Harwood back in Ottawa no end of worry and he placed a standing order with the RCAF and USAF to overfly the camp at every opportunity to check on its residents. Harington wrote that a qualified radio technician "should be attached to such a party in future." On 6 December a USAF plane dropped an AN/URC-4 transceiver which enabled the camp to talk with any plane in the vicinity.

Harington describes the daily routine:

The meteorological observations were divided into three 8-hour shifts. Each person completes a shift every three days after which he has a day and a shift off. Shifts are as follows: morning (0700-1500) two met. observations, man on shift fills [Coleman] lamps and [naphtha] stove, gets dinner in the evening. Afternoon (1500-2300) three met. observations, man on shift gets lunch at noon, sweeps, and gets water. Night (2300-0700) three met. observations, man on shift gets breakfast. A bath is taken by each member when coming onto night shifts. This man sleeps during the day in the Shoran addition. [Shoran is a navigation aid]. Meals are thus arranged at regular hours. Breakfast 0800, lunch 1300, dinner 1900. On Sunday Breakfast is eaten at 0900, dinner is at noon and a light supper at night completes meals for the day.

Despite an inoperative radio there is always plenty to do and, if anything, we lack time. Extra hours are spent reading, translating and learning languages, playing cards and games, or improving the camp.

The sleeping bag and other clothing were found to be very comfortable at temperatures down to



Department of National Defence

Hazen Camp, viewed from the air, May 1958.

−40°F. On arrival back at base camp Nov. 1, I discovered that toes and tips of fingers were frost bitten. Treated these and was able to begin regular routine the evening of Nov. 4. [It was the first and last case of frostbite].

Supplies have been found to be very satisfactory. Pickles, spices and condiments have been found very important in relieving the monotony of meals. Corn syrup and molasses are also important. Used our last package of yeast on Feb. 16. However, we still have plenty of material for baking powder biscuits, corn bread and a few packages of roll mix.

Harington summed up about the end of March:

> Naturally, we have not gone without complaining. However, these 'bitching sessions' are without malice and a good way to work off steam.
>
> Health of the party has been excellent. There have been no major or minor accidents or cases of sickness. Members of the winter party have co-operated well by taking care to dress properly in order to avoid frostbite and colds, and have taken vitamin pills regularly. The camp has been kept as clean as possible, which also helps to ensure general health. All precautions are being taken against occurrence of snow-blindness.

Harington concluded each monthly report with "All party well and in good spirits."

Airstrip: A main preoccupation of the four scientists was laying out and maintaining an aircraft runway on the lake. A site was picked about two-thirds of a mile from the camp and the runway aligned approximately northeast-southwest with good landing approaches at either end. Work on its began on 20 October and was completed twelve days later. It was 9,000 feet long, including approaches, and 200 feet wide. Records were kept regularly of ice and snow thickness — and of any serious cracks. Winter lighting was mainly moonlit snow and flares were installed along the runway and readied to be lit for any landing. Aircraft would, of course, use their landing lights as well. Messages were tramped periodically in the snow, sometimes twenty feet high, such as "NO RADIO POWER," "ICE TEN INCHES" and "ALL WELL".

About midnight 8 December, one night after a full moon, a plane was heard overhead. A Coleman lamp was set outside the living hut as a beacon. The plane, an RCAF C-119 from Namao, Alberta, flew low over the camp and dropped five bundles by parachute. They contained mail, fresh meat, other supplies and a Christmas tree, complete with glass decorations, unbroken. Radio contact between ground and plane failed.

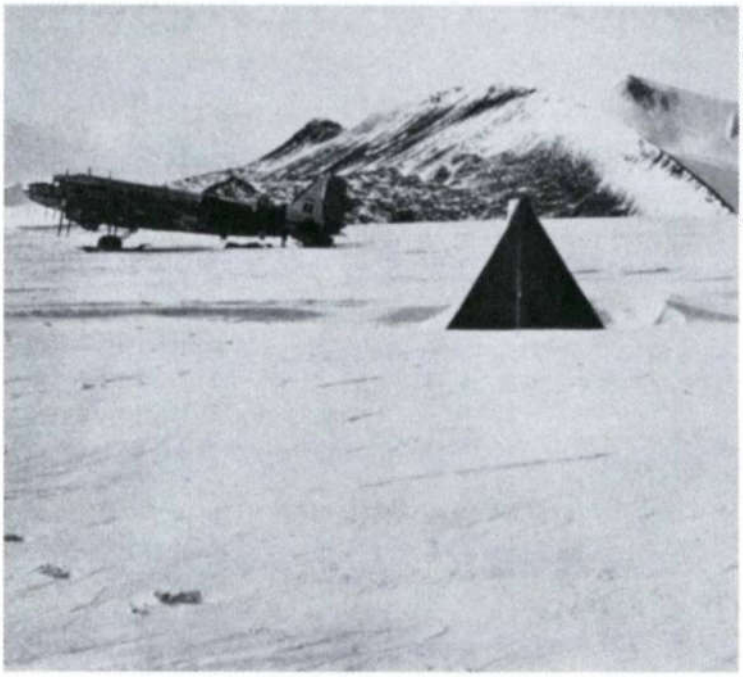
"It was just like Christmas opening everything," Harington wrote. "The tree and decorations were put up on Dec. 22. It seemed like a new hut and made night shifts much more pleasant. I administered a 'homemade' Rorschach ink-blot test later in the evening and hope the results will be of some interest to the psychiatrists who have given us previous batteries of tests and interviews from the University of Manitoba." He continued:

> Everyone dressed for Christmas — shirt, tie, jacket and flannels. We had excellent meals interspersed with a series of games and camera shots. We were very happy with our presents and I am sure everyone really felt it was Christmas despite continuation of met. observations and thermometer readings. . . .
>
> Celebrated New Year's by carrying out an old custom — that of having a 'dark stranger' bring a piece of coal over the threshold at midnight. Powell

Department of National Defence

Dog-sledding on the ice cap at 6,000 feet, June 1958.

Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith, known as "The Hat".



Department of National Defence

Gilman Glacier Camp, 1958, showing a tent pitched the previous summer.

was delegated to be the dark stranger and the coal had been mined a few hours previously from the cliff face this side of Fox Delta south of camp. This coal was found to be extremely friable.

Toasts were made all round with a couple of fingers of sherry in each glass (which I had been proud of saving for the occasion). We compared the results of our ink blot tests with great hilarity, hit the sack and thus another year passed.

About noon on 25 February, radio contact was made with USAF C-54 from Thule which free-dropped four bags of mail and magazines. About midnight the same day an RCAF North Star from Montreal free-dropped five bags of mail and other supplies on a path only 50 yards from the living hut. "It never rains but it pours," Harington wrote in the log. Messages were exchanged between ground and plane. No aircraft landed on the runway all winter.

Weather: It was cold at Hazen (the mean temperature in December, the coldest month, was −47.7°F.) but winds were so moderate that the windchill was about the same as at Dorval Airport, Montreal.

Freeze-up came on 2 September and by 26 September the lake had completely frozen over. The monthly mean temperature in November was −35.1°F. which Harington judged a Canadian record "at least". The mean minimum temperature for the month was −42.8°F. Snow depth was nine inches and there were numerous falls of ice prisms. Wolves were common in the last week of November, a pack of six periodically scouting the camp but doing no damage. There were two husky pups in the camp. Jeff, the male, died on 19 December but the bitch, Mutt, throve.

The highest temperature in December was −20.2°F. The coldest of the winter was −68.5°F. on 4 January and readings in the −60s were made for five consecutive days after that. There was a storm 17-19 January, the only one of the winter, but the wind did not exceed 45 mph. The Ruggles River was found to be running open in February. The open water was between 40 and 70 yards across and extended a half-mile downriver.

The sky brightened through February, enabling the camp to save on naphtha which had had to be used for the Coleman lamps when digging ice holes and fetching water. By 20 February it was light enough to take outdoor photographs. On 28 February the copper glow of the sun could just be seen along the horizon.

There were five aurora displays during February. Harington wrote of the one on 10 February: "The sky to the east was yellow with light while a misty cherry red glowed behind the mountains to the west. . . . A dull red glow was noticed through the cloud to north and south, while centred on 090 azimuth a pale lime glow showed up bands of cloud. The glow to the west was most pronounced and seemed to pulsate. . . . At its dullest the rosy glow looked exactly like that of a large city, its lights tinting the cloud at night when seen from a distance. Then the patch would intensify to the cherry red of smouldering birch embers."

Peter Ward photo

"Alas, poor Yorick!". An unidentified member of the Hazen party examines a musk-ox skull.

Harington and his colleagues kept up their observations until August 1958, determining that the mean annual temperature for Lake Hazen for 1957-58 was −6°F.

They were evacuated by the U.S. icebreaker *Atka* which also called at Alexandria Fiord, southeast Ellesmere, to provide medical and dental care for 30 Inuit and two RCMP constables. The previous summer, the American *Westwind* had provided this service. The Canadian icebreaker *Labrador*, which resupplied Alexandria Fiord, carried no doctor. ♦

Retired journalist Dave McIntosh of Ottawa knew Trevor Harwood and G. Hattersley-Smith, "about a century ago".

Pass the popcorn,

blow up those balloons

and let's hear it for

OUR NEXT PRIME MINISTER

The Political Convention: Democracy in Action

Or Simply the Ultimate Photo Opportunity?

By CHRISTOPHER MOORE

Butter up the popcorn. Organize the betting pools. On 13 June we will all be settling in to watch the nation's favourite televised political show, a national leadership convention. It's a uniquely Canadian spectacle. No other country in the world links the British parliamentary system with American-style conventioneering. The modern convention is still quite new to Canada, in fact, and some experts predict its heyday has already passed. The Progressive Conservative Party leadership convention at the Ottawa Civic Centre in June might just be the last of its species.

So, before we tune in to the Tories partying and politicking, there is just time to review some highlights of this Canadian political tradition. And — to inquire where leadership convention politics are going.

Inventing the convention

From long before Confederation through two decades of the twentieth century, Canadian political leaders emerged from the Parliamentary caucus, not from leadership conventions in hockey arenas. John A. Macdonald and Wilfrid Laurier proved themselves as natural leaders in the caucus or the Cabinet. They became party leaders by the approval of their party's Members of Parliament alone. They never faced a leadership convention larger than the size of the party caucus.

That changed in 1919. The Liberals were desperate to heal the wounds caused by the still-festering conscription crisis. In 1917 English-speaking Liberal MPs had joined Sir Robert Borden's pro-conscription Union government. French-speaking Liberals, including Laurier, had remained in Opposition. In 1919, with the old party lines being restored, Laurier called a national policy convention to reunite the party. Then he died before the convention could be held.

With only a "rump" of Quebec Liberals left in the Parliamentary caucus, the suddenly leaderless party seized the opportunity to bring back Unionist Liberals by turning over the leadership selection to the national convention. In August 1919, Ottawa hosted Canada's first leadership convention.

The 1919 contest established some lasting traditions. Several candidates emerged, and it took three ballots to select a winner. The victor, William Lyon Mackenzie King, was an outsider without a parliamentary seat. And, as so often in later contests, Quebec's votes proved crucial. Despite King's later claims, he had not been Laurier's chosen successor, but as an anglophone who had not joined the Union Government (not being in Parliament, he did not have the opportunity), King locked up francophone support. "You never saw such friends as those Frenchmen," wrote a party insider, Allen Aylesworth. "They voted — every man Jack of them — just to stand by the men who stood by Laurier. That is the whole story in a nutshell — let the newspapers prattle all they like."

With their party reassembled, the Liberals hailed the convention system as a more open and representative process. The other parties followed their example, abandoning the old caucus-selection system almost without debate.

Early conventions were hardly the free-wheeling contests that today's viewers prefer and that today's organizers strive to create. For decades, most leadership conventions were coronations. The party brass chose the leader and the delegates fell loyally into line. Campaigning was minimal. The night before King's victory in 1919, it was not even certain who would stand for the leadership. And almost forty years later, things had hardly changed.

In 1958, Lester Pearson, the choice of the Liberal party brass, was willing to be leader — but not to run an elaborate campaign. In Peter Stursberg's oral biography of Pearson, Walter Gordon recalled asking Pearson about his headquarters just days before the vote:

"Haven't got any."

"Who's your manager?"

"Haven't got one."

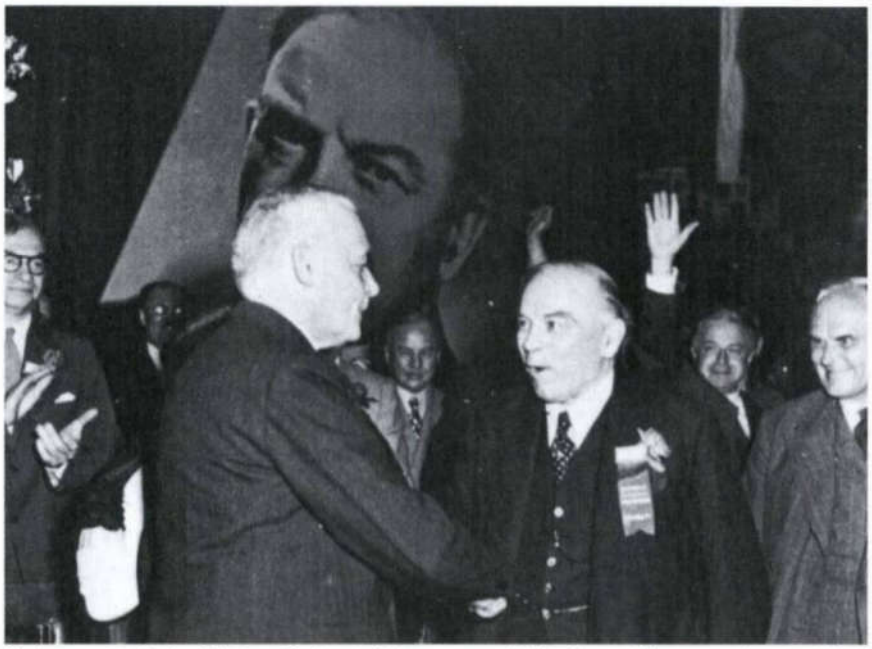
"Where's your money?"

"Haven't got any."

No-Campaign Campaigning

Pearson didn't need those things, for a more discreet campaign could be just as effective in those days. Dutiful delegates chose him on the first ballot, with triple the support of his only real rival, Paul Martin. A third contender, Reverend Lloyd Henderson, got one vote, although he and his wife were both delegates. (Henderson ran again in 1968, and became a minor legend by managing to get no votes at all.)

But winds of change were blowing already. In 1956, when the Conservatives held their own leadership convention, the party establishment had preferred Donald Fleming. But mostly it wanted anyone but John Diefenbaker to lead the party. The grassroots members of the party wanted Diefenbaker, however, and they put him in. In his memoirs, Dalton Camp describes a Tory bagman covering up his frustration: "Listen, if Diefenbaker wants it, let the crazy son-of-a-bitch have it. There's lots of time for Donald." For the first time, a party's grassroots tasted power. Diefenbaker went on to the Prime Minister's office, Donald Fleming's time never came, and the era of the wide-open convention loomed ahead.



National Archives of Canada

Such a surprise! Prime Minister Mackenzie King, centre, and C.D. Howe, right, congratulate a subdued Louis St-Laurent, the hand-picked winner of the 1948 Liberal convention.

Conventions as we know them today are the child of television and money. By the late sixties, pollsters, image doctors and media managers were ready to redefine leadership campaigning. The first truly modern convention came in 1967, after Diefenbaker discovered that party conventions could fire leaders as well as hire them. "For the first time," wrote Geoffrey Stevens in his biography of Robert Stanfield, "a Canadian party had set out to emulate in scale and style an American presidential nominating convention. It had marching bands and balloons and pretty girls by the hundred. . . . It was a great show and it made great television."

The modern leadership convention

By 1967, the teams of organizers behind every serious contender made sure that leadership races stretched out for many weeks, and the cost of a leadership bid skyrocketed. In the dramatic climax to the Conservatives' 1967 convention, it took five ballots and seven hours at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto before Robert Stanfield squeaked past Duff Roblin. The race made great viewing for the TV audience, even if the candidates had not learned all the tricks of the new trade. Veteran Tory organizer Finlay McDonald laughingly described one event he arranged for Stanfield, who was no one's idea of a media star. "Out come the majorettes and the band. Stanfield looks like he is going to his funeral."

In the spring of 1968, the Liberals found a natural campaigner for the television age. Pierre Trudeau may have been an intellectual and a political newcomer,

Donald Fleming, Davie Fulton and John Diefenbaker were all in the running at the Conservative convention of December 1956, but most of the delegates followed John.

but both the public and the party establishment quickly succumbed to "Trudeaumania". Nevertheless, Trudeau and his highly-skilled, big-spending organizers had a hard fight in a crowded field. It took four ballots to elect him, 1,203 votes to 954, over Robert Winters, a Bay Street executive who for once found himself running against the "Establishment."

At a critical moment in the 1968 convention, Judy LaMarsh, then the only high-profile woman in national politics, accidentally showed off television's total power over modern conventions. One of the new, directional microphones let the TV audience eavesdrop as she advised Paul Hellyer to go to Winters in order to stop "that bastard" Trudeau. "Come on, Paul," she urged, "you're forty-four and we've still got lots of time."

Hellyer never again challenged for the Liberal leadership, but he later contested, and lost, a Conservative party race.

In 1973, political scientist John Courtney identified what his colleagues jokingly called Courtney's Law of leadership campaigns: the front-runner always wins. The very next national convention, the Conservative race of 1976, produced perhaps the best television spectacle of all the leadership battles by confounding Courtney's Law. Claude Wagner led on the first ballot, but in the next few hours his advantage slipped away.

In the network booths, pundits gaped in amazement at "the Flora factor" (when 325 delegates went into the voting booths wearing Flora Macdonald's colours — and only 214 voted for her) and at the Stevens shift, when conservative financier Sinclair Stevens threw his support to "Red Tory" Joe Clark, who had been third on the first ballot. "Sinc sized him up as if he were a penny mining stock and decided to buy," said one observer quoted in *Winners, Losers*, a book about the race. Candidates and delegates surged back and forth across the floor, pursued by shouting, sweating reporters and organizers. Finally Clark, the youthful unknown from Alberta, nosed out Wagner on the fourth ballot. Backers of another unknown, Brian Mulroney, had spent a fortune to prevent Wagner from locking up all Quebec's votes, but Mulroney ran third and returned to private life.

The Heavyweight Championships

Clark and Mulroney also dominated the next Conservative race, in 1983. Much of the action had gone on before the convention, as the rival organizers fought vicious riding-by-riding battles to get their own slates of delegates appointed. Like Wagner, Clark led on the first ballot. Then he watched helplessly as the ABC coalition — Anybody But Clark — slowly formed behind Brian Mulroney, who had never run for any other elective office when he won the party leadership.

After 1983, it was the turn of the Liberals to change leaders frequently. Running for the party leadership in 1968, John Turner had assured delegates he was not simply bidding for consideration "at some vague convention in 1984," but 1984 turned out to be his year. Returning to active politics after seven years as the party's prince-in-exile, he won easily, routing six rivals in only two ballots. For the first time in years, a leadership race looked dull. But party president Iona Campagnolo marred Turner's triumph by declaring Jean Chretien "always first in our hearts." The convention's big soft heart was with Chretien, it seemed, but its small brain had decided Turner looked like a winner. So Turner got the job — and led the Liberals to electoral disaster three months later.

Six years later, Chretien got the votes as well as the hearts. In the meantime, he had imitated Mulroney

National Archives of Canada

The reality attempts to live up to the image as Lester B. Pearson presents himself to the 1958 Liberal convention.

They love us! Brian and Mila Mulroney share a golden moment on the road to Sussex Drive. The road would be rougher later on.

and Turner by avoiding active politics in order to control his image more effectively, and by 1990 he looked like the winner the Liberals needed. This time Chretien had to beat only two plausible rivals, Paul Martin Jr. and Sheila Copps. But the outcome was too predictable to satisfy the television audience, and the ratings were disappointing. Chretien was no sooner elected leader than the media began to dismiss him as "yesterday's man."

Where had all the excitement gone? Because the organizers now struggle, long before the convention itself, to lock up an unbeatable slate of delegates, the enormous cost of a leadership bid deters most potential leaders from entering. A system that has always claimed to be democratic and representative is now only open to those who can raise several million dollars in campaign funds. Since few candidates can demand that kind of money in order to run a respectable third, anyone who is not a sure winner may not be able to run at all.

When Brian Mulroney resigned his leadership in February 1993, the Conservative Party discovered to its horror that it was in danger of returning to the old coronation style, with private money rather than party brass now dictating the convention's choice.

So perhaps the Conservative convention of 1993 will come to be seen as the end of an era. If the outcome is a foregone conclusion, and the party can muster only the excitement of Dixieland bands and "spontaneous" demonstrations, spectator boredom — as much as public disgust as the excess of spending and the dearth of real debate — may persuade party strategists to start looking for alternatives. ♦

"Leadership Conventions," Christopher Moore's sceptical look at this Canadian tradition, will be broadcast on CBC Radio's "Ideas" on 4 June.

Following the Leader

How the Rest of the World Does It

In recent years, some provincial leadership races have followed the American lead and moved toward a "primary" system. They let all members of the party vote for the leader, in a process that made the convention itself almost unnecessary. Alberta's new premier, Ralph Klein, was elected party leader by tens of thousands of voters, many of whom were "five-dollar Tories" recruited at the last moment by Klein's organizers.

In the rest of the world, every country with a government modelled on the British parliamentary system normally lets elected parliamentarians choose their party leaders — the system Canada abandoned in 1919. In Australia, Jamaica, New Zealand, and Britian, no one waits for years while a desperately unpopular leader decides whether or not to resign. When Margaret Thatcher lost the confidence of her backbenchers, they replaced her with John Major in less than a week. In recent years, incumbent prime ministers in both Australia and New Zealand have been removed by their party caucuses.

Canadians tend to assume that caucus selection would be elitist and undemocratic. Political scientist John Courtney of the University of Saskatchewan is not so sure. "The real test of democracy," he points out, is not the number of people voting but "who's accountable to whom." Delegates are accountable to no one, and party leaders chosen by conventions of delegates are only accountable when another convention is held, which may be years later.

Pierre Trudeau once called backbench MPs "nobodies." In Canada, MPs *are* accountable to the voters, since they have to worry about re-election. But they cannot hire and fire their leaders, so they have little influence on policy and limited ability to represent their constituents. It is not like that in the rest of the parliamentary world.

Quote, Unquote

1919:

"There was never any strong sentiment in favour of King personally. . . . The bulk of the delegates who supported him knew little or nothing to his credit or discredit."

— Liberal MP Charles "Chubby" Power recalls the 1919 convention in his memoir *A Party Politician.*

1948:

"I felt like a lonely man during that period, because I did not wish to approach anyone for fear he might be immediately looked upon as a supporter of mine."

— Liberal MP Charles "Chubby Power challenged Louis St-Laurent at the Liberal convention of 1948, but he hardly dared to ask delegates to risk the wrath of the party.

1958:

"I was appalled by the lack of organization and by the ezey-ozey way in which things were being done."

— Watching Pearson campaign in 1958, Keith Davey was already looking ahead to the modern campaigning techniques that he and other backroom strategists would soon bring to Canadian politics.

1967:

This man is your man
This man is our man,
For party leader,
He's A-OK

— Robert Stanfield's campaign song, to the tune of "This Land is Your Land".

1968:

"Mrs Pearson is restrained from rushing onto the floor to wave a Trudeau banner."

— Peter C. Newman's description (in his book *The Distemper of our Times*) of the crucial moments of the 1968 Liberal convention makes clear that the party elite was not immune to Trudeaumania.

1976:

"Being a woman is the big thing that lost Flora the leadership."

— Flora Macdonald's biographer Fred Armstrong sums up the Flora factor.

1984:

"I'm a tactile politician, mano a mano, eyeball to eyeball, hand to hand."

— Candidate John Turner, accused of sexist gesturing, tries to explain why he patted party president Iona Campagnolo on the bum.

THE PACKET

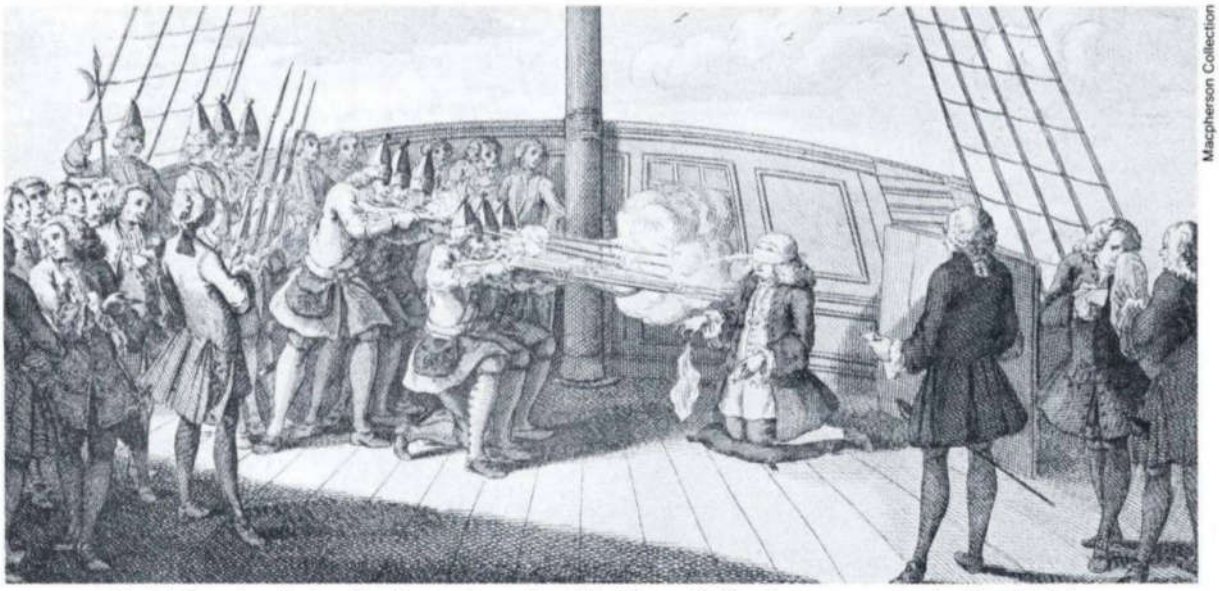
Letters, Notes and Opinion

The Blakney Mystery: Solved?

Let me add my two cents worth to the "Blakney" Mystery by making two observations. Firstly, the Blakney side of the seal is in relief and, therefore, decorative, while the obverse side (depicting a figure which is clearly St. Christopher as you observe in the magazine) is indented and, therefore, functional. It shows that this curiosity was in fact a sealing-wax stamp for a member of the eighteenth-century middle class who, not being a member of the landed gentry, would not have had their own signet ring for making coat-of-arms imprints when sealing their letters. The small handle shown on the side (it can swivel to the upright position at a 90 degree angle from the seal) was to keep oneself from burning one's fingers while pressing the seal into the hot wax, thus leaving a decorative relief imprint of St. Christopher.

Secondly, as to the identity of our good man "Blakney"! Being a military historian of the Seven Years War period, my conjecture is as follows: The man is not a civilian, but a soldier in an eighteenth-century frock-coat uniform holding a small sword in his right hand, popularly known in those days as a "sangar". When one closely examines the writing it says: "BRAVE: GE. BLAKNEY". Army ranks in the eighteenth century were often abbreviated to two letters: Lieutenant, Lt.; Colonel, Co.; General, Ge. Thus, in my estimation, I read the inscription as "BRAVE: GE[eneral]. BLAK[e]NEY", the Hero of Minorca, 1756. If I am right, then your correspondent is indeed correct in his belief that the seal is commemorative of some great deed but, in this case, it is not connected with exploration, nor with Canada!

William Blakeney was a British soldier of Irish birth, Colonel of the 27th Regiment of Foot (Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers) which fought at Culloden in 1745 and was promoted Lieutenant-General in 1747 by King George II. Blakeney then spent the next nine years as the Acting-Governor and Garrison Commander of the sunny isle of Minorca off Spain, never dreaming that on the outbreak of the Seven Years War in 1756 his idyllic retirement posting would be the first objective of the French! The duc de Richelieu with an impressive invasion force of 15,000 men, supported by a powerful French fleet, besieged Blakeney and his motley force of 5,000 soldiers and workmen, bottling them up in the decrepit Fort of St. Philip. Blakeney held out for one month in the crumbling fortress until a British fleet under the infamous Vice-Admiral Thomas Byng hove in sight. After an indecisive naval battle, Byng "scarpered", leaving Blakeney to his fate. The old general carried on his heroic resistance for another 71 days, then



Macpherson Collection

Admiral Byng gives the signal for his execution on board the "Monarch". Shot "to encourage the others", said Voltaire.

surrendered his fort on 28 June 1756. Blakeney and his courageous garrison were transported to Gibraltar by the French with full honours of war. Byng, however, was tried and executed for cowardice (causing Voltaire in his *Candide* to coin the famous words "*pour encourager les autres*") while Blakeney on his return found himself to be a national hero and received a peerage for his valiant efforts!

Thus, the "Blak[e]ney" curiosity in the possession of your Tasmanian correspondent was most likely a popular souvenir of the day, sold on the streets of London much along the same lines that one can buy knick-knacks or pins etc. from street vendors of this century on the occasion of royal weddings, coronations and the like. I wouldn't be surprised if the British Museum or the Imperial War Museum in London have similar sealing-wax stamps superimposed with a likeness of "BRAVE: GE. WOLFE". I'm sure your correspondent can easily verify my suspicions by dropping a line to one or both of the curators of the above institutions.

As an aside, James Wolfe wrote to his father during the siege of Minorca (his own apotheosis as Hero just three years away) saying that "Blakeney has no great obligations to the Navy upon this occasion. They have left him in an ugly scrape, out of which, I am persuaded, he will only be delivered by a cannon shot. The project of succouring Minorca . . . may probably end in a disgraceful peace."

Lieutenant-Colonel Ian McCulloch, St-Hubert, Quebec.

Aged Hero

With regard to the "Blakney Mystery" seal. A possible candidate might be Lieutenant-General William Blakeney (1672-1761). Defender of Minorca 18 April - 28 June 1756 against 15,000 French troops. Although Blakeney was forced to surrender, he had held out for 71 days with a force numbering 1/3 that of his opponent. Blakeney was at the time of the siege of Fort St. Philip in his eighties!

On his parole to Gibraltar and return to England Blakeney was feted, made Knight of the Bath, and rewarded further with an Irish barony. He became a public hero.

I would read the obverse as BRAVE: GE (ENERAL) BLAK (E) NEY. I have no explanation for the reverse save that it may refer to Minorca or the person of St. Philip.

Michael J. Hodder,
Wolfeboro, New Hampshire.

Colleen Archer: A Birthday

On 27 May 1993 Canadians marked the 100th birthday of Algonquin Provincial Park — a park covering an area of 7,600 square kilometres (or 3,000 square miles) only three hours away from major population centres such as Toronto and Ottawa. The history of this region has been dramatic and often controversial, and the controversy continues today as the logging industry, recreational users, commercial ventures and aboriginals all make specialized demands on the park.

While the aboriginals who lived nomadically throughout the area had little impact on the land, the same cannot be said for European immigrants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the early 1800s England was seeking new sources of timber for building her fleets, and by the late 1830s the removal of the giant pines from what is now Algonquin Provincial Park had begun. Each spring the logs that were squared in the highlands were sent to be carried by rivers such as the Petawawa, the Bonnechere and the Madawaska to the Ottawa, leaving behind bark and slash to fuel fires.

The highlands are a part of the Canadian Shield and as such had proved unsuitable for farm colonization, representing instead one of the region's last large wilderness regions. In 1885 Alexander Kirkwood, a clerk in the Ontario Department of Crown Lands, proposed a forest and park be set aside "for the preservation and maintenance of the natural forest," and to protect "the headwaters and the tributaries of the Muskoka, Petawawa, Bonnechere and Madawaska Rivers."

The Algonquin Park Act was passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario in 1893 to provide "a public park, and forest reservation, fish and game preserve, health resort and pleasure ground for the benefit, advantage and enjoyment of the people of the Province." Since then the park has seen within its boundaries the rise and fall of the railway, the coming of the highway, the heyday of the grand old hotels, and the building of camps to teach young people wilderness skills. For one hundred years rangers have patrolled the park, naturalists have studied it, and famous painters and photographers have recorded its beauty.

Books abound on the history of the park, including several new ones released for the centennial. Other centennial projects include films, new trails, special recreational events, and a new Visitor Centre.

Another major project is the Algonquin Park Logging Museum. Exhibits here include a reconstructed camboose logging camp, a steam warping tug or "alligator" (one of just three surviving examples), and a working log chute and dam.

Colleen Archer is a freelance writer who lives in Deep River, Ontario.

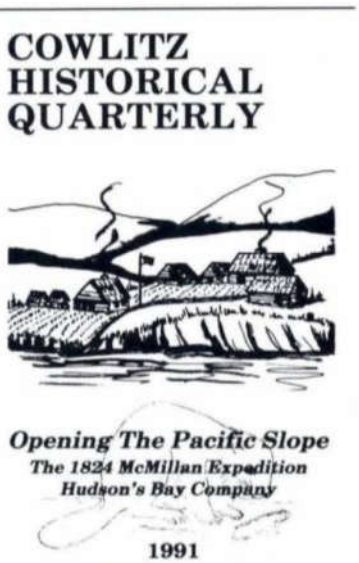
One Link in the Trading Network

Morag Maclachlan writes:

When George Simpson, Governor of the Northern Department of the Hudson's Bay Company, arrived at the mouth of the Columbia in 1824 he immediately sent an expedition to examine the lower Fraser and report on its suitability as a headquarters for the Company. James McMillan led the expedition assisted by the three clerks — John Work, Thomas McKay and Francis Annance. All three kept journals and made maps and McMillan made a report. Neither McKay's journal nor any of the maps has survived but John Work's, in the British Columbia Archives and Record Service, was published in the *Washington Historical Quarterly,* Vol. III, 1912 and Annance's is in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in Winnipeg. Nile Thompson discovered the Annance journal and edited it in a very attractive booklet published by the Cowlitz County Historical Society. Included are photos of artifacts from the Cowlitz Museum and Fort Vancouver Historic Site and maps based on those in Mary Cullen's *History of Fort Langley.* The journal is of significance to local historians in the Cowlitz area and will no doubt be very useful to many people.

Unfortunately Dr. Thompson had some difficulties with the text and even the subtitle which should read Nov/28 [18] — J. 1825 is interpreted as 128 Y. 1825. There are several places where omissions occur because the text was considered indecipherable. Most make little difference to its usefulness, but inevitably some of the meaning is lost. The most serious misunderstanding occurs in the entry for 10 December. When the expedition reached Snihomish country McMillan succeeded in getting two chiefs to accompany the party as guides, but the Indians employed so many delaying tactics that Annance compared the situation to that faced by the North West Company when attempts were made to gain access to the Canton market. Thompson assumed that the party passed British customs officers in Puget Sound. Since the area from 54° 40′ N. to 42°N was held in joint occupancy by the British and the Americans, one of the outcomes of the War of 1812, there is not the slightest possibility that there would be customs officers where there was no border.

Thompson identifies the Indians encountered in the Salmon River Valley, called "Cahoutetts" by Work, as Squawtits from near



Seabird Island. The proof that these Indians were Kwantlen, quite apart from the location, can be found in the journal kept by Alexander McKenzie while on board the *William and Ann* in 1825 as it proceeded north from Fort George to Observatory Inlet. "Whotleakenum," the Kwantlen chief is identified as the "Cahoutetts Indian" presented with a "Chief's Clothing" by the McMillan party in the year before.

It is unlikely that the party reached Seabird Island or the Harrison River as Thompson suggests. Work's directions are very detailed and it is much more reasonable to accept the conclusion reached by T.C. Elliott, who edited Work's journal, that Hatzic Slough was the point at which the party began the return journey down the Fraser.

The assumption that the father of Francis Annance was French is incorrect. Annance always signed his name as Francis and not in the French way. It was others in the Hudson's Bay Company who used the French form. Thompson and Virginia Urrutia, editor of the quarterly, expressed gratitude to the Hudson's Bay Company Archives for permission to publish the journal and the Coat of Arms of the Company, but unkind cut, Winnipeg, the home of the Archives, is spelled incorrectly, not once but both times it appears.

Local history has many important uses, but the best local historians are aware of the larger setting into which people, places and events fit. The title of this booklet "Opening the Pacific Slope," reveals too narrow a view. The Pacific slope had been opened before 1824 by Alexander McKenzie, Lewis and Clark, Simon Fraser, John Jacob Astor and David Thompson. In 1824 the traders were opening one link in the trading network. This expedition also represented one of the phases in the retreat of the fur frontier and part of the process of creating political divisions on the North American continent.

Morag Maclachlan of Vancouver, British Columbia, is working on an edition of the "Fort Langley Journals", to be published by the University of British Columbia Press. Her article on Annance appeared in the April/May 1993 issue of "The Beaver".

Landing on His Feet

By J.E. Rea

Lester and Maryon Pearson

THE WORLDLY YEARS
The Life of Lester Pearson, 1949-1972

By John English. Alfred A. Knopf Canada, Toronto, 1992. 473 pp., illus. $32.50.

It is most unlikely that Canadians who lived through the 1960s thought of Lester Pearson as a great prime minister, or even a very good one. All too frequently, as we watched the nightly newscast, we were regaled with the latest example of political ineptitude. Or, more unfortunately, we were treated to yet another exposure of a Liberal cabinet minister who violated the code of conduct of office or Parliament. That on most occasions these turned out to be French Canadian members was embarrassing for the government and fuel for the less-than-subtle innuendo of the Tory Opposition. Add to this the unending, mean-spirited and often petty quarrels between John Diefenbaker and Pearson and it is not hard to understand why the prestige of Parliament and politicians sank to the lowest level in our national history and from which it has not yet recovered.

To some extent, this image of sleaze and bumble was media-driven. But it is hard to blame them for milking the pathetic story of George Victor Spencer, the dying postal clerk, who had been denied his pension because he had been a low level spy, even though he had never been prosecuted. Even less could the media forbear exploiting the amorous adventures of sometime spy *cum* courtesan Gerda Munsinger in the bedrooms of well-known Tories.

What is extraordinary looking back on it all is how the muck has receded and what has emerged is Mike Pearson's record of legislative accomplishment. Without the advantage of ever enjoying a majority government he and his colleagues changed the face and, in a very real sense, the heart of Canada forever. Perhaps it was Pearson's very lack of experience or his naiveté that induced him to venture into areas to which most other politicians had given a wide berth. What other prime minister but Pearson would choose the annual convention of the Canadian Legion to begin his campaign for a new national flag? His predecessor, Diefenbaker, had misunderstood and then ignored the Quiet Revolution in Quebec. Pearson responded by appointing the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, the results of which we are still trying to work out. He also appointed the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, thus setting in train a fundamental and long-overdue change in Canadian society. And every Canadian is convinced that our national pension plan and universal medicare, which his government implemented, are inalienable entitlements that should be stamped indelibly on our birth certificates. All this and much more is part of the Pearson legacy.

John English, who teaches Canadian history at the University of Waterloo, in his second volume of the life of Lester Pearson, *The Worldly Years*, discusses these events, but only as part of a wider context. For him, Pearson never stopped being the diplomat. So despite the myriad issues that one could take up in that eventful six years, English gives perhaps a sur-

prising amount of attention to Canada's relations abroad. But it is not necessarily misplaced. The reality of our national life is to share a continent with the confident, powerful, bumptious and sometimes thoughtless Americans. Pearson's relations with John Kennedy and, especially, Lyndon Johnson are therefore matters to be given extensive consideration. Hence we learn more about Canada's involvement with the Vietnam war than about Ottawa's relations with Western Canada. But this is not intended as criticism. Such an interpretation accurately reflects the mind and interests of Pearson. So the United Nations, NATO and the European Economic Community drew a good deal of his attention and issues of domestic politics and, on occasion, even the fate of the Liberal Party itself seemed relatively less important.

There are some fascinating subtexts in this study. Relations between Pearson and Walter Gordon went from warm friendship to guarded co-operation to cold indifference. When it came time to step down, Pearson quietly forwarded the candidacy of Pierre Trudeau as successor, but after the latter's selection, Pearson was never consulted, even as a courtesy, and his foreign policy was turned on its head.

Despite English's splendid research, Pearson remains a very private man. His wife Maryon is more open and human and comes much more to life in this biography of her husband. One of her aphorisms — behind every successful man is a surprised woman — is now part of Canadian lore. In sum, this is a fine book; one of the best political biographies in our literature. It richly deserves all the awards it is collecting.

J.E. Rea teaches history at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

John English, the author of "The Worldly Years", is the winner of this year's $5,000 J.W. Dafoe Foundation book prize.

Earning Brownie Points

By Michael Bliss

THE PEOPLE'S RAILWAY
A History of Canadian National

By Donald MacKay. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver and Toronto, 1992. 328 pp., illus. $29.95.

I always thought the "Brownie points" we get for doing good deeds had something to do with the little elves who come to our doors selling cookies. The term actually comes from the Brown System of Discipline, which was widely used by North American railways in the early years of this century and is apparently still enforced on Canadian National Railways. You lose points for lateness and other sins, gain credits for such virtues as noticing defective equipment.

We learn about Brownie points in the middle of Donald MacKay's new history of the CNR system from the time of its formal creation in the early 1920s to the present. MacKay, one of Canada's best popularizing historians, was commissioned by the company to complete a job begun many years ago by the late G.R. Stevens, whose two volumes on the CNR's predecessor companies have become classics of Canadian railway history. Mackay's *The People's Railway* is neither as pioneering in its research nor as sardonic in its judgments as Stevens' work, but serves as a good overview of CN's operations in its first seventy years. Author and company deserve a few *Beaver* Brownie points for thus adding to our historical literature.

It is not clear that anyone would award similar kudos to the men who made and managed the CNR. Canada has a gigantic state-owned railway system because at the beginning of this century politicians and businessmen recklessly overestimated the country's future railway needs. They built two extra transcontinental lines (the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific/National Transcontinental), both of which promptly went broke. Ottawa, already on the hook for hundreds of millions in bond guarantees, nationalized the lines to keep the trains running. CN was born in desperation, burdened with debt, scorned by real railroaders as a basket case that would never make economic sense.

MacKay tries hard to show that the company has been well-served by dedicated employees and conscientious, sometimes inventive managers. Given its handicaps — the dead hand of political interference, the dead weight of the debts (though the debt has twice been written down, in other words assumed by the taxpayer) and thousands of miles of track it still can't shut down, CN has attempted some interesting innovations. Its first leader, the colourful Sir Henry Thornton, pioneered in the adoption of radio and in trying to make a public enterprise competitive with the CPR. After World War II, Donald Gordon launched experiments in containerization, "unit trains", and rejuvenated passenger service, as well as presiding over the dieselization of the system. Gordon's successors fought an imaginative battle to save the passenger train (remember the "Red", "White", and "Blue" fares, and *Rapido* service?), and are now redeploying the system as a bulk freight carrier with a more continental orientation in the age of free trade.

In fact Sir Henry Thornton was a flamboyant, possibly dishonest, incompetent, finally dismissed for extravagance."Dieseling" Donald Gordon, a highly-political appointee was, as MacKay admits, "a bull who carried his own china shop" (the author is too discreet to mention that Gordon's problems included, as his biography makes explicit, severe alcoholism). CN's attempts to preserve passenger service were an expensive exercise in ploughing the sand, or, literally, running empty trains. The much-ballyhooed *Turbo*

was exceptional, however, being too poorly-built to run regularly at all.

CN had a few decent years in the mid-1980s, in large part because of its real estate holdings, but its balance sheet and prospects were never good enough to make it a serious candidate for privatization. The recession has been devastating, as CN frantically tries to shed workers, track, and ancillary enterprises. Thanks to the Mulroney government, the company's current chief executive officer is Paul Tellier, a man with no railroading experience but, as one of the architects of Meech Lake, a vast knowledge of constitutional issues. I wonder if he will be nicknamed "Turbo" Tellier.

MacKay works hard to put the best face on CN's problems, and to keep us reading as the system lurches from one disappointment to another. The book is adequately researched and well-illustrated. But there is no picture of Toronto's magnificent CN Tower, a failing for which Mr. Brown would have docked a point or two.

Michael Bliss is Professor of History at the University of Toronto and a member of the Advisory Board of "The Beaver".

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Digging Up the Past

By Peter Carver

TIME DETECTIVES
Clues from our Past

By Donalda Badone. Annick Press, Toronto, 1992. 112 pp., illus. $12.95.

For young readers, the study of archaeology may seem like a dusty pursuit involving gray professors chipping away at obscure ruins in South America or Egypt or some other remote part of the world. Or, on the other hand, it may conjure up the romantic adventures of an Indiana Jones disappearing into snake-infested caverns in a faraway land. Either way Donalda Badone's *Time Detectives* is likely to be a surprise, since it is totally devoted to contemporary archaeological "digs" in Canada.

The appeal of *history* has to be in the latter two syllables of the word — "story". And here the author relies initially on story to entice the young reader into an interest in the role of archaeology in discovering our Canadian past. The book is divided into ten sections, each focusing on a particular archaeological site — from the Viking landing-place at L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland to the Bluefish Caves near Old Crow in the northern Yukon where woolly mammoth bones have recently been unearthed.

Each section of the book begins with a short narrative which seeks to bring the reading child into the picture, through recounting the lives of other children who have walked in these historic places.

For example, we join Kit-Fox, a Blackfoot girl whose family helped drive herds of buffalo over the precipice at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump in southern Alberta, long before the horse arrived on the western plains and changed the buffalo hunt forever.

And we see two young French children who have come to visit Louisbourg where their ancestors once lived and defended the maritime fortress from British invaders.

And we meet Frances and Donald Ross whose father was chief factor for the Hudson's Bay Company at Lower Fort Garry almost 150 years ago.

In some cases the young protagonists are historical figures; in others they are fictional creations of the author, brought on stage to dramatize a special piece of history.

Following the narrative introduction, the nature of each archaeological dig is described and explained. Most importantly, Donalda Badone doesn't allow her readers to remain passive in their introduction to archaeology. On the contrary she encourages children to conduct their own digs and explorations, as close as their own back yard. Kids using the activity suggestions — several in each chapter — will soon realize the fascination and value of a discipline which puts us in touch with people from other times who inhabited various parts of our country. By extension, we come to see what the vague word, "heritage", is all about.

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Having accompanied the author through *la maison du Paradis*, for instance, a house which has stood in old Quebec for more than 200 years, young readers learn that something as simple as collecting marbles found here can tell us a good deal about the games and lives played out by the families who lived here.

Among the most intriguing "digs" described in *Time Detectives* are those in Fort Selkirk in the southern Yukon and in Qaummaarviit on Baffin Island. In both native communities, the native people themselves have been active participants in the exploration of their history. In partnership with professional archaeologists, they have discovered important information about the lives of their ancestors.

A brief but crucial appendix to this well-organized book points out how young readers themselves can become actively associated with archaeological digs, can themselves become "time detectives".

Admirable as is the objective of *Time Detectives*, one might have wished for production values more in tune with the expectations of the contemporary young reader. For the price, couldn't the publisher have opted for some colour in the photographs and illustrations? Unfortunately, some of the black and white photos are so small as to be indistinct and therefore of little value. Publishers should provide lively colour and design, if they're going to win young readers over to an enthusiasm for subjects like history and archaeology.

And a map of Canada locating all the sites would have helped orient the contemporary reader.

Still, for readers in Grades 6 and up who can overcome such concerns, *Time Detectives* offers solid rewards and the possibility of a lifelong interest.

Peter Carver is a Toronto editorial consultant specializing in books for young people. He is a partner in the new publishing firm Boardwalk Books.

The Scottish Military Tradition in Canada

The Beaver, August/September

The Company of Adventurers

A Narrative of Seven Years in the Service of the Hudson's Bay Company during 1867–1874

Isaac Cowie
Introduction by David Reed Miller

Company of Adventurers describes the early, lusty history of the Hudson's Bay Company and the years of Cowie's service, when manufactured goods were driving out the demand for furs and buffalo hides. It contains rare information about the Assiniboin and Plains Cree Indians during the period before their confinement to reservations.

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Two Remarkable Women

By Anne Morton

THE IRON ROSE
The Extraordinary Life of Charlotte Ross, M.D.

By Fred Edge. University of Manitoba Press, Winnipeg, 1992. 292 pp., illus. $29.95 hardcover, $15.95 paper.

TELL THE DRIVER
A Biography of Elinor F. E. Black, M.D.

By Julie Vandervoort. University of Manitoba Press, Winnipeg, 1992. 327 pp., illus. $24.95.

The University of Manitoba Press is to be congratulated on the publication of these two biographies. Strikingly designed by Norman Schmidt and handsomely produced, both are absorbing reads about remarkable women.

As Charlotte Ross and Elinor Black were both women who practised medicine in the province of Manitoba, one might expect these two lives to have much in common. What struck me was how differently the lives of women may be shaped, both by their own personalities and circumstances, and by biographers attempting to recreate their lived experience on paper.

Charlotte Ross (1842-1916) is the one answer to two questions: Who was the first woman with a medical degree to practise in Quebec? And who was the first woman with a medical degree to practise in Manitoba? Born in Yorkshire, she came to Ontario as a child. Her mother brought with her cuttings from a white rose bush said to have been descended from the very bush from which the Yorkists plucked their emblem at the onset of the Wars of the Roses. Charlotte was to plant cuttings from her mother's bush at her home in Whitemouth, Manitoba where they flourished so well that she was able to take bouquets to her patients.

Charlotte's father, Joseph Whitehead, figures largely in the biography of his daughter. He deserves to, for he also was an important figure in Manitoba history. As a boy of ten he had acted as stoker on Stephenson's *Rocket* and went on to become a successful railway contractor. It was he who had barged into Winnipeg the first railway locomotive in the West, the *Countess of Dufferin*.

Charlotte Ross

From childhood Charlotte displayed a keen interest in caring for the sick, a vocation for which the unhappy but by no means unusual history of her family gave her wide scope. Her mother and a younger brother died when she was seven, and in her late twenties she nursed her older sister, Mary Anne, as she died of tuberculosis. Charlotte wanted to look after the sick in as knowledgeable and professional a manner as possible. She read up in medical text books and finally, with the encouragement and support of her husband, David Ross, she set off in 1870 to attend Women's Medical College in Philadelphia, leaving her husband and three children behind in Montreal. At the time there was nowhere in Canada where a woman could study for a medical degree. The three-year course was to take Charlotte five years — her first year had to be repeated after she suffered a miscarriage and she took a year off to have the fourth of what was to be a total of eight children.

In 1881, after Charlotte had practised for a few years in Montreal, where, despite the fact that she confined her practice to women and children, she still made nearly all the medical establishment uncomfortable at the very thought of a woman doctor, the Ross family settled in Whitemouth, a pioneer community about sixty-five miles north-east of Winnipeg, where David ran the sawmill. In a virtually all-male community, Charlotte might have expected that she would have to abandon her profession but, again with the encouragement and support of her husband, she set to work and continued to practise until 1912. The next year, one of her grandaughters, Edith Ross, won the Faculty of Medicine gold medal at the University of Manitoba and went on to become the first woman anaesthetist at the Winnipeg and St. Boniface General Hospitals.

In 1933 Airdrie Bell Cameron presented a paper on Dr. Ross, based in large part on interviews with those who had known her, to the Rupert's Land Alumnae Association. Rupert's Land Ladies College was an Anglican girls school in Winnipeg and the old girls were presented with an authentic and, or so Mrs. Cameron hoped, inspirational Manitoba heroine: "Every day the people who knew this wonderful woman are

getting fewer, but she left behind her a tradition of service which is the privilege of the women of Manitoba to continue." In 1979 the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth reprinted the Cameron paper in its local history, *Trails to Rails to Highways*, and in 1982 Peguis Press brought out a short life by Michael and Barbara Angel in its series of pamphlet biographies of Manitoba's great and good, *Manitobans In Profile*.

In 1980 Christina and Fred Edge, at that time living in the Whitemouth area, came upon the Cameron paper in the local history and felt that a woman like Charlotte Ross deserved to be more widely known. The Edge version, filled out as it is by the use of family papers and by its use of the "dramatized biography" format (words and thoughts are invented for Charlotte), is the longest of all three published versions of Charlotte's life. All three, however, have as their core the stories about Charlotte handed down over the years in her family and in her community — Charlotte and her children and her precious possessions, including her piano, whizzing into Whitemouth on two flatcars; Charlotte in the bar of the CPR hotel, using a poker chip as a thimble as she struggles to force her needle through the weather-beaten skin of a man whose throat had been slashed in a brawl; Charlotte helping to pump the handcar as she dashes to the aid of a homesteader injured by a falling tree and arriving in time to save him by amputating his right leg with a carpenter's handsaw as he lay on the kitchen table; Charlotte not only delivering babies but also helping out by getting down on her hands and knees to scrub the floor and leaving the new mother a gift of bread she had baked herself and, most poignantly and unforgettably, going out to attend the birth of a child while her youngest son was dying of diphtheria and beyond all medical care.

Edge's technique for the re-telling of these stories is essentially a dramatic one. He focuses on Charlotte in action and he has an eye for the vivid detail — as Charlotte races along on the handcar, she times the swinging of the pumphandle so she can let go, wipe her sweaty and slippery palms on her petticoats and catch the handle on the upstroke with no loss of rhythm. The effect is to turn the readers into witnesses. A legend comes to life before us as, enthralled spectators, we sit and watch, cheering on the life well spent, the good fight well fought.

Elinor Black

Private pain and loss, pig-headed male doctors, are but obstacles which, triumphantly overcome, serve to demonstrate the heroine's true worth.

Like Charlotte Ross, Elinor Black (1905-1982) was a woman of firsts. The youngest daughter of Frank Black, a Scottish-born businessman and politician, she was born in Nelson, B.C. and spent part of her childhood in Calgary and Edinburgh. But it was to be Winnipeg that was, as she once proclaimed, "[her] sphere". Receiving her M.D. from the University of Manitoba in 1930, she went to London for a period of training in her chosen field of obstetrics and gynaecology. She was the first Canadian woman to become a Member (1938) and then a Fellow (1949) of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. She was also the first woman to be President of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (1961). Most impressive of all, she was the first woman to head a department in a Canadian medical school when, in 1951, she became head of the departments of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of Manitoba and the Winnipeg General Hospital. She held both these appointments until her retirement in 1964, retiring from her private practice in 1965.

Elinor was also like Charlotte Ross in that she made a great and lasting impression on those who knew her. As she died so recently, Vandervoort was able to talk to many people with memories of Elinor, and the book is salted with their comments — "awesome", "like Michaelangelo's David", "like Queen Mary", "what a gal!". Part of this was tribute to Elinor's physical presence — she was tall (almost six-foot), athletic and good-looking, part because she was that rare thing, a woman with power, but much of it was because of the personality and drive that got her where she was.

Yet, while *Tell the Driver*, like *The Iron Rose*, is an affirmation of a splendid life, it is something other as well, something more troubling. I suspect that many readers will, like myself, find themselves in tears. It is one of those "many moving lives of women" of which Carolyn Heilbrun writes:

> *. . . they are painful, the price is high, the anxiety is intense, because there is no script to follow, no script portraying how one is to act, let alone any alternative stories.*
>
> (***Writing a Woman's Life,*** *1988:39)*

There are several reasons for this difference in effect between the two books. One is, of course, that Charlotte and Elinor lived different lives and practised in very different communities. Another is that Elinor's life is much more extensively documented than Charlotte's. Most important, however, is what Vandervoort has chosen to do with the wealth of sources, both documentary and oral, available to her.

For one thing, Elinor's childhood and old age are treated as seriously as the prime of her life, her holidays as seriously as her career. Above all, Vandervoort adopts a peculiarly female approach to telling the story

of Elinor's life. When women talk about a life, their own or another's, that life takes the shape not of a knotted string of facts but of a cat's cradle of possibilities. The emphasis is not just on what someone did but on what her motives might have been and what the possibilities for future behaviour are. (The appeal of soap opera, a genre intended for, if not exclusively enjoyed by, women is that there is more talk than action; even the male characters indulge.)

While *Tell the Driver* is chronological in framework, following Elinor from birth to death, this progression of facts is spun around with talk — quotes from Elinor's writings, quotes from those who knew her, Vandervoort's analysis of and speculation on Elinor's personality. At times, the author even appears to be offering Elinor suggestions as to how she might conduct her life. One might find this irritating and redundant (it is a bit late now, surely?), yet Vandervoot does it because she is so aware that life is not merely one thing after another but also a state of constant questioning and wondering, always in flux.

The book even ends with talk — with quotes from the funeral eulogy, with the story of the caller who phoned the minister who delivered the eulogy just so he could have the comfort of talking about Elinor and finally, with the conversation with the Winnipeg cabbie which gives the book its title. The reader too takes part in all this talk, sometimes disagreeing with the author, sometimes wanting to offer her something from one's own experience that confirms her understanding of Elinor. (Elinor was the youngest of her family and had to endure from her siblings the nickname "Babe", still in use when she was old enough and distinguished enough to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Winnipeg; this is a book that youngest children will read with painful jolts of recognition). The reader of *Tell the Driver* is expected to serve not as a witness, as with *The Iron Rose*, but as a participant.

Elinor's story, as Vandervoort tells it, is one of great achievement and joy in that achievement but also one of loneliness and unhappiness. This was to no small extent the result of her childhood and of family dynamics, which Vandervoort relates with kindness and sympathy and a fine sense of the telling detail. At age seven, Elinor wrote in a letter to her father, "I am sending this little letter all by myself. No one helped me." The letter, as Vandervoort points out, is in her mother's handwriting.

The central dilemma of Elinor's life was that she was a woman and she was a doctor, an extremely successful doctor, and people were not expected to be both. Even today, one's feminism really has to be on the *qui vive* not to think of a man when someone says "My doctor". The difficult balancing act this imposed on Elinor provides the book with its painful emotional core. It is also the basis of the story that gives the book its title. On one of her research trips to Winnipeg, Vandervoort took a cab driven by a man who (as if to prove that everybody in Winnipeg does indeed know everybody else) told her that he remembered Elinor. She had once ordered a cab for Dr. Black and lost it to a man who the driver assumed to be the doctor. From then on when she called for a cab, she said "And tell the driver — Dr. Black is a woman." This is a story at which women laugh even while wondering if laughter is the most apt response. After all, why the hell should she have had to tell the driver?

Two books, two women — one a heroine because of the life she achieved and the way that life has been shaped in memory and by the writer's craft, the other — well, something more troubling, less comforting certainly but in her own way a heroine too.

Anne Morton is an archivist living in Winnipeg where everybody does know everybody else. She went to school with a great-great-granddaughter of Charlotte Ross and her mother has memories of Elinor Black.

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Jack Was Every Inch a Sailor

By Robert Malcomson

JACK TAR IN HISTORY
Essays in the History of Maritime Life and Labour

Edited by Colin Howell and Richard Twomey. Acadiensis Press, Fredericton, 1991. 275 pp., illus. $21.95 paper.

Jack was every inch a sailor, five and twenty years a whaler. Jack was every inch a sailor. He sailed upon the deep blue sea.

That popular folk tune epitomizes the stereotypical view of the one dimensional seafarer who is presumed to have gone mindlessly to work upon the waves, happily surviving tempests and the gullets of whales. But who was Jack, really? And what role did he play in the greater scope of things, the expeditionary armadas and the industrial fleets?

Jack Tar in History attempts to focus attention upon the individuals who have not been remembered in the popular histories of the sea. The volume is the result of a symposium of the same name held at Saint Mary's University in Halifax during October 1990. The conference was organized by the editors, Colin Howell and Richard Twomey, both of whom teach at Saint Mary's. Their introduction sets a context for the thirteen papers in the compilation and an afterword by Gregory Kealey of Memorial University of Newfoundland points to the most significant aspects raised by the essays. Under headings dealing with revolution, law, family, war and labour, the articles seek to undo the image of Jack Tar as "a projection of seafaring life half-glimpsed and filtered through a myriad of prejudices," as one essayist, Valerie Burton, puts it.

Ira Dye's contribution is a good example of the type of work found herein. Dye, former submarine commander and currently a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Virginia, developed a data base from the prisoner-of-war data collected by the British during the 1812 War. Analysis of the information reveals a physical and social profile of American mariners of that period. The average, white seafarer is shown to have been almost twenty-seven years old, standing five foot, six and a half inches tall, with an oval face and a medium, but strong build. His eyes are grey, his hair brown, his complexion fresh and healthy looking. Subsets of similar information are given for the blacks and mulattos among the sample, as are details about the various ranks.

The relationship between Jack and the world ashore is explored in papers like the one by Lisa Norling, a doctoral student at Rutgers University. Norling describes how the symbiotic link between Nantucket whalers and their wives changed as that industry extended to the mainland during the 1830s. After that time, whaling, and the whole business of going to sea, was more open to the world at large and was sentimentalized by the influences of the religious reform movement and popular literature. Differences in the roles of the genders were accentuated due to these forces and the traditional function of the whaler's wife was diminished, resulting in her acquiring some acrimonious attitudes about the separation of the man from his family. The traditional bond of Nantucket-style family life was gone.

The story of Newton Bowers and how his all-but-forgotten testimony was symbolic of early changes in the understanding of basic human rights is examined by Julius Scott, a member of the history department at Duke University. A Negro born in Massachusetts, Bowers sailed to Saint-Domingue in 1793 to set up business on that island where a rebellion had freed the slave population. Later that year he and seven other blacks were aboard a vessel when it was captured by a British privateer. At the resulting inquiry into the seizure Bowers argued for his release and that of his fellows, stating that they were "free Negroes and not the property of any Person on board." Unpersuaded, the British sold most of the blacks and sent Bowers to prison where he died. Julius Scott presents the larger context in which this one small event occurred and ties it to a series of similar expressions of liberation made by the contemporaries of Newton Bowers.

The essays in this collection are fully referenced, some of them including tables and figures. Although they are written with skill and clarity, the papers present a challenging read. The range of topics requires a wide knowledge of historic events, political developments and social conditions. For the general audience the subject matter may prove too taxing, whereas the serious student will relish the depth of investigation and discussion and probably find no end of leads for subsequent research. The compilation is an important addition to the study of life afloat because it goes beyond the studies of conditions aboard ships, exemplified by N.A.M. Rodger's classic *The Wooden World* to examine in minute detail the individual seafarer and his place in the world. This social history, with its bottom-up view, will undoubtedly spawn other exhaustive and enlightening investigations.

Robert Malcomson is the co-author of "HMS Detroit: The Battle for Lake Erie" and a past contributor the "The Beaver". His article on the steamer "Northcote" will appear in the August/September issue.

The Jews in Quebec

By Abraham Arnold

JEWS AND FRENCH QUEBECERS
Two Hundred Years of Shared History
By Jacques Langlais and David Rome, translated by Barbara Young. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, 1991. 187 pp., illus. $24.95.

This book is a collaboration between a Roman Catholic priest dedicated to the cause of cross-cultural relations and a Jewish archivist/historian with a passion for Quebec history and concern for past misunderstanding and hostility between Jews and French Quebecers.

The idea for the book, first published in French in 1986, is a good one. In particular the book gives a good account of the Great Yiddish Migration, 1880-1940; The Reaction of French Quebec, 1880-1945; and The Quiet Revolution of Jewish Quebecers, 1945-1976.

Beginning with the English translation preface, however, the authors do not always present themselves clearly. The preface speaks of the "merging" of French and Jewish ethno-cultural communities. Do they really mean to suggest that French and Jews in Quebec have merged, in the dictionary sense of blending together to lose identity?

Dealing with the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the book implies that a Jewish congregation and a Catholic parish may be comparably dubbed "parallel structures". This goes beyond credulity. The Catholic parish remains hierarchy-ruled to this day. Jews have not had a religious hierarchy since the destruction of the Second Jerusalem Temple. Moreover in Canada and the U.S. the establishment of every synagogue became a voluntary undertaking and every rabbi was appointed by the community and not by a hierarchic authority.

Historically, any ten male Jews could form a congregation, but the establishment of a cemetery often came first, rather than last, as claimed in this book. The early synagogues did start schools and tried to meet other social needs. But, as this book recognizes, in Montreal the first permanent Jewish social welfare agency was established outside the two congregations in 1863.

The book is replete with errors and omissions. The date of Ezekiel Hart's election to the Quebec Assembly is first given as April 1806, then a little later it appears as April 1807; the latter is correct. Ezekiel's brother Benjamin, it is said, also sought a political career. But it was another brother, Moses, not Benjamin, who ran for office several times.

Dealing with the first Jews to be nominated as justices of the peace, only the case of Moses Hayes and Benjamin Hart in Montreal is discussed. They refused the appointments in 1833 in the belief they still had to swear "on the true faith of a Christian" to take the oath of office. They are said to have waited until "Queen Victoria herself" appointed them in 1837. It is difficult to understand why Samuel Becancour Hart, also nominated as a J.P. in 1833, in Three Rivers, is not mentioned. In fact, S.B. Hart qualified for office that year by taking the oath without the offensive words before Joseph Badeaux, a French oath commissioner. This information is confirmed by David Rome himself in *Canadian Jewish Archives* (new series #25, 1982).

The Jewish population of Quebec, mostly in Montreal, grew from 100 in the early 1800s to 2,500 by the 1880s and by then there were three congregations. The first one, Shearith Israel (Remnant of Israel), was established in 1768, adopted the Sephardic ritual and became known as the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation, even though their original members (1760-1800) were Ashkenazic (originating from Germany), as Rome-Langlais explain.

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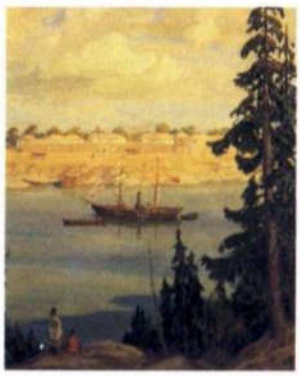
By A. Sherriff Scott.



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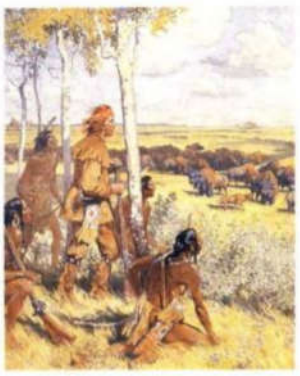

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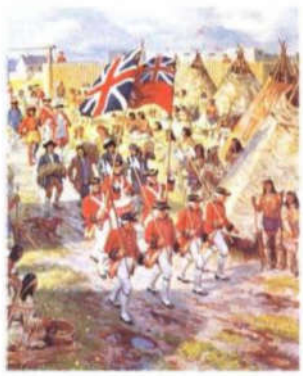

D. *Trading Ceremony at York Factory*
By A. Sherriff Scott.

E. *R.M. Ballantyne and Chief Trader George Barnston at Tadoussac, 1846*
By Charles Comfort.

F. *Battle in the Bay, 1697*
By Norman Wilkinson.

Over the years the Hudson's Bay Company has commissioned distinguished Canadian painters to create works depicting important events in the long history of the Company. Among the most popular works in the HBC collection are those pictured above by C.W. Jefferys, A. Sherriff Scott, Norman Wilkinson and Charles Comfort.

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And Benjamin Hart was a founder and long-time leader of this first congregation.

Rome-Langlais also credit Benjamin Hart with establishing "the legal framework" for an Ashkenazic congregation in 1846, without citing any source. This is highly improbable. Benjamin Hart had acted for the government against the Patriots in the 1837 rebellion. In the 1840s he became disillusioned over the Rebellion Losses Bill and joined in support of the U.S. annexationist movement. This led to his fall from grace with the government and to exile in New York, which is mentioned earlier in the book.

By 1846 recently arrived Jewish immigrants from England and central Europe formed the English, German and Polish Congregation, following the Ashkenazic ritual. There is no evidence that Benjamin Hart had anything to do with this congregation.

In 1882 a Jewish Reform congregation was founded in Montreal. The authors compare this to the Roman Catholic *aggiornamento*. The Jewish reform movement, started in Germany in the early 1800s, sought to bring the Christian Protestant style into the synagogue. So if there is any valid comparison between synagogue and church it is with Protestant denominationalism rather than with any Catholic trend.

The Rome-Langlais historical narrative moves to more solid ground in recounting the arrival of the largely Yiddish-speaking immigrants in the 1880s. The growth of the Jewish working class and cultural and ideological movements — Zionism and socialism — and the building of Jewish schools and social institutions are recounted.

This chapter ends with a discussion of communism and its danger to the Jewish community. Here confusion sets in. We are told that in 1924 Michael Buhay, an east European Jew, was the Communist candidate in the federal Cartier riding and won 600 votes. And a footnote here says "He was re-elected in 1945." This footnote really belongs to Fred Rose, the Communist who was elected in Cartier in 1943 and re-elected in 1945.

Ivan Avakumovic's *The Communist Party in Canada: A History* is cited as a source for additional information but Avakumovic's book does not confirm what Rome-Langlais say about Buhay and the number of Jews in the Communist Party.

The authors also recall that "in 1945" the Royal Commission into the Gouzenko affair asked why a relatively large number of Jews, "about a dozen," were involved in the espionage intrigue. In fact the Gouzenko Royal Commission was formed in 1946 to consider the RCMP findings on the Gouzenko disclosures and the detainees who were held incommunicado. Based on these findings, 15 people were brought to trial, five of them Jews who were subjected to racial taunts. Five of the 15 arrested, including two of the Jews, were found not guilty.

When the Royal Commission's findings were disclosed, Conservative and C.C.F. leaders, and at least one leading Liberal attacked the government's methods. And this affair led John Diefenbaker to make his first call for a Canadian Bill of Rights. It is therefore shocking to find this book, published 40 years later, exaggerating the numbers and trying to apologize for the Jews who were involved.

Chapter III, the Reaction of French Quebec, first deals with the development of anti-Semitism in response to the Jewish migration movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It then turns to the Jewish school question, a long-standing problem because of Quebec's denominational school system.

The Jews opted for the Protestant schools but, for many decades, they were treated like second-class citizens by the Protestant school boards. There was an internal struggle over education in the Jewish community as well as the external struggle for recognition in the "public" school system, such as it was. Here the Rome-Langlais account is largely satisfactory.

Only in the 1960s was the question of equal representation for Jews in the school system finally resolved. At this point however the book is found wanting. It states that Jewish representation on Protestant school boards was "partially resolved" in 1965, when a Jew was named an associate member of the Montreal School Board and after that Jews began to run and get elected to school boards in suburban Montreal.

In fact Jews living in Chomedey (later Laval), just north of Montreal, began to fight for the right to run for the school board by 1960 and they won that right in the courts. In 1963, while living in Chomedey and working with a parents' committee of the Protestant School Board of Greater St. Martin, this writer found that the board already had a Jew sitting as an elected member. David Rome, the long-time archivist/historian with the Canadian Jewish Congress, should certainly be aware of what happened with that suburban school board before the situation was resolved with the unrelated Montreal School Board.

There are numerous nagging errors in the second half of the book. One error of omission comes at the start of the chronology which begins with a listing of European countries from which Jews were expelled: England, 1290; Spain, 1492;

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Portugal, 1496. Why is the 1306 expulsion of Jews from France omitted?

The last chapter — Where is the Jewish Community Headed? — begins with a quote: "In Canada today Jewish people live under conditions of freedom which have not been exceeded anywhere in the world." The source is cited as "Abraham Arnold, *Jewish Life in Canada* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1976), p. 87." If the source information stopped there it would be correct, but it adds: "Speech delivered at the golden anniversary celebration of the Saint-Jean Baptiste Society, June 24, 1902". Well, this writer is pleased to be quoted in the Rome-Langlais book, but I still have 20 years to go to reach the venerable age of 90.

Incidentally, some mistakes in the English edition came about during translation. But the others, and the questionable interpretations, are carry-overs from the French edition. The latter has an index which the English edition does not have.

This book needed much better editing.

Abraham Arnold has done extensive research and writing in Canadian Jewish history and has served for two years as national president of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society.

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Market Day at Place Jacques-Cartier, Montreal, 1927. From: "Montreal Photo Album: Photographs from Montreal Archives", edited by Nancy Marrelli and published by Vehicule Press in collaboration with the Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery, Concordia University.

Books Recently Received

Recently published books on Canadian history include:

Working in the Woods: A History of Logging on the West Coast. By Ken Drushka. Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, British Columbia, 1992. 300 pp., illus. $39.95.

Debts to Pay: English Canada and Quebec from the Conquest to the Referendum. By John F. Conway. James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Toronto, 1992. 90pp. $16.95 paper.

A Fostered Dream: The Lure of the Peace River Country 1872-1914. By David W. Leonard and Victoria L. Lemieux. Detselig Enterprises Ltd., Calgary, 1992. 195 pp., illus. $29.95.

From Protest to Power: Social Democracy in Canada 1900-Present. By Norman Penner. James Lorimer and Company Ltd., Toronto, 1992. 168 pp. $16.95.

Literary Images of Ontario. By W.J. Keith. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1992. 261 pp., illus. $45.00 hardcover, $18.95 paper.

Frontier Days in Alberta. Edited by Garnet Basque. Sunfire Publications, Langley, British Columbia, 1992. 112 pp., illus. $15.95.

The Old Log School House. By Gavin Hamilton Green. Natural Heritage/ Natural History, Toronto, 1992. 208 pp., illus. $12.95.

Awaiting the Millenium: The Children of Peace and the Village of Hope 1812-1889. By Albert Schrauwers. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1993. 300 pp., illus. $50.00 hardcover, $17.95 paper.

The Prairie West: Historical Readings. Edited by R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer. The University of Alberta Press, Edmonton, 1992. 748 pp. $30.00.

The Light of Nature and the Law of God: Antislavery in Ontario, 1833-1877. By Allen P. Stouffer. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, 1992. 273 pp., illus. $34.95.

A Good Solid Comfortable Establishment: An Illustrated History of Lower Fort Garry. By Graham MacDonald. Watson and Dwyer Publishers, Winnipeg, 1992. 98 pp., illus. $19.95.

Cork Lines & Canning Lines: The Glory Years of Fishing on the West Coast. By Geoff Meggs and Duncan Stacey. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver and Toronto, 1992. 166 pp., illus. $35.00.

A Small Piece of Ireland?

Who makes an historical place an Historic Site? Far from being a simple matter of recognizing history where it has occurred, the naming of historic sites sometimes turns acutely political, reminding us how much history is made — and remade — in the present.

Sometimes governments compete for the control of history. I once met an historic sites official who, while working for the federal government, drafted a letter to Alberta offering to make the buffalo jump called Head-Smashed-In into a National Historic Park, to be developed by the Canadian Parks Service of Environment Canada. By the time the letter worked its way through channels, the official had moved to the Alberta provincial service, where he had the curious duty of drafting the reply to his own letter. Alberta's reply was, more or less, "Keep your federal paws off our Alberta heritage." So it was Alberta, in association with the Blackfoot people of southwest Alberta, which developed the magnificent museum at that remarkable site, which is one of the Canadian places recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Apart from the usual federal-political wrangles, the making of an historic site can also become a battle between governments and people over control of the past, the meaning of the past, and whose history shall be commemorated. In recent years, there has been no more vivid example than Grosse-Ile, a small island in the St. Lawrence downriver from Quebec City, which may or may not one day be a National Historic Site. (See *The Beaver*, February/March 1991).

Forts and battlefields dominated the list of national historic sites for many years after Canada established its first historic park, the battlefields of Quebec City, in 1908. But in recent decades, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board (HSMB) — which advises Ottawa on places "of national historic significance" — has sought more diversity in what is commemorated. Today the HSMB actively seeks, not just battlefields and prime ministerial birthplaces, but sites that give tangible expression to many themes of Canadian history. So a cannery in Steveston, near Vancouver, is now a national historic site on the theme of the fishing industries, and the Motherwell homestead, near Yorkton, Saskatchewan, interprets Western agriculture.

The Celtic Cross on Grosse-Ile. (Canadian Parks Service)

It was in that light that the HSMB began to consider Grosse-Ile. The HSMB had identified immigration as a key theme in Canadian history, and in 1984 it recommended that Grosse-Ile become a national historic park dedicated to that theme. From the HSMB's point of view, Grosse-Ile seemed a plausible candidate for an historic site to interpret immigration. Between 1832 and 1937, when millions of immigrants came to Canada by ship, Grosse-Isle served as a quarantine station for immigrants who came up the St. Lawrence. Like Ellis Island in New York or Sydney's Quarantine Island, it seemed a likely place to tell the story of immigration, and perhaps even to create a genealogical research centre.

The Canadian Parks Service of Environment Canada (usually known until recently as Parks Canada) took up the HSMB's recommendation in a "Development Concept" for Grosse-Ile, published early in 1992. The ninety-page document declared its respect for the actual state of the island, but it also foresaw an elaborate development, capable of attracting large numbers of visitors to a park dedicated to the theme of immigration.

The reaction was a storm of protest. "Compared to what we are used to, it was out of all proportion," says Tony Bull of the Parks Service. Letters flooded in to the Parks Service, politicians, and the Prime Minister's office. There were hostile editorials in the press, and some 20,000 signatures on a petition opposing the plan.

The Parks Service and the Canadian government were being castigated for planning a theme park over the bones of the dead, and the criticisms came with particular force from Irish-Canadians. Grosse-Ile does not mean immigration to them. In the history of Ireland and its people overseas, Grosse-Ile above all means sickness, suffering, and death.

Grosse-Ile was a quarantine station for more than a century, but its busiest, most desperate years were 1832-34, when cholera ravaged the immigrant fleets, and the late 1840s. In both periods, most of Canada's immigrants and almost all of those quarantined on Grosse-Ile were Irish. When the potato famine struck in the late 1840s, a million and a half people fled Ireland (and another million died there). Of those heading for Canada, one in six died en route, and at least 5,000 (some say 20,000 or more) are buried on Grosse-Ile. These facts make Grosse-Ile one of the larget mass graves in Canada and the most important Great Famine site anywhere on earth outside Ireland. Though many Irish refugees did reach Canada and survive, their descendants see Grosse-Ile less as the place to celebrate immigration than as a memorial to dead Irish refugees.

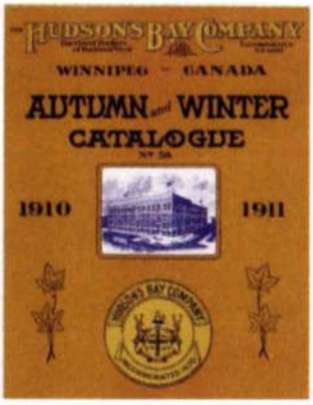
In its eagerness to develop its theme of immigration, the Parks Service had been shockingly negligent of these concerns. It had entitled its Grosse-Ile plans "Canada: Land of Hope and Welcome." It had emphasized that members of many ethnic groups had immigrated up the St. Lawrence — although most of them, being in good health, had passed right by the Grosse-Ile quarantine station. The Development Concept even reported that the Irish tragedy of 1832 and 1847 had been "overemphasized" and should not be dwelt on.

Confronted with the hurt and the anger of the Irish community, the Parks Service backtracked. When a supplementary development plan appeared early in 1993, "Land of Hope and Welcome" had vanished. The Service agreed any suggestion that Irish suffering had ever been overemphasized was "inappropriate". It stressed that the island's graves and its memorial character, as well as the "Irishness" of its history, would be respected in any park development. Yet the new hearings that the Parks Service held in April 1993 were still acutely political — both for the politics of the Canadian Parks Service and for Irish-Canadian politics.

Irish-Canadian politics are sometimes also Irish politics. Irish-Canadians' protests about Grosse-Ile were co-ordinated by an organization named Action Grosse-Ile, and some Action Grosse-Ile organizers have been closely linked to modern Irish nationalism. Action Grosse-Ile's historian, Michael Quigley of Hamilton, told me he had helped organize a Canadian tour some years ago for prominent Sinn Fein politician Danny Morrison, who is famous for his slogan that Northern Irish politics should be pursued "with the ballot paper in one hand and the Armalite in the other." And at the height of the Grosse-Ile protests, Action Grosse-Ile's chairman, a retired banker named Denis Leyne, was arrested in New York and charged with helping to smuggle bomb-detonators used by the IRA in Northern Ireland.

Quigley does not hide his own politics, but he stresses that Leyne, who is now out on bail, has been convicted of nothing (and, even if convicted, would not be the first Irish nationalist jailed on false evidence). Mostly, however, he stresses that if Action Grosse-Ile were only a sort of historical section of Sinn Fein, it could never have united so many diverse sections of Irish- (and

GIFTS FROM THE PAST



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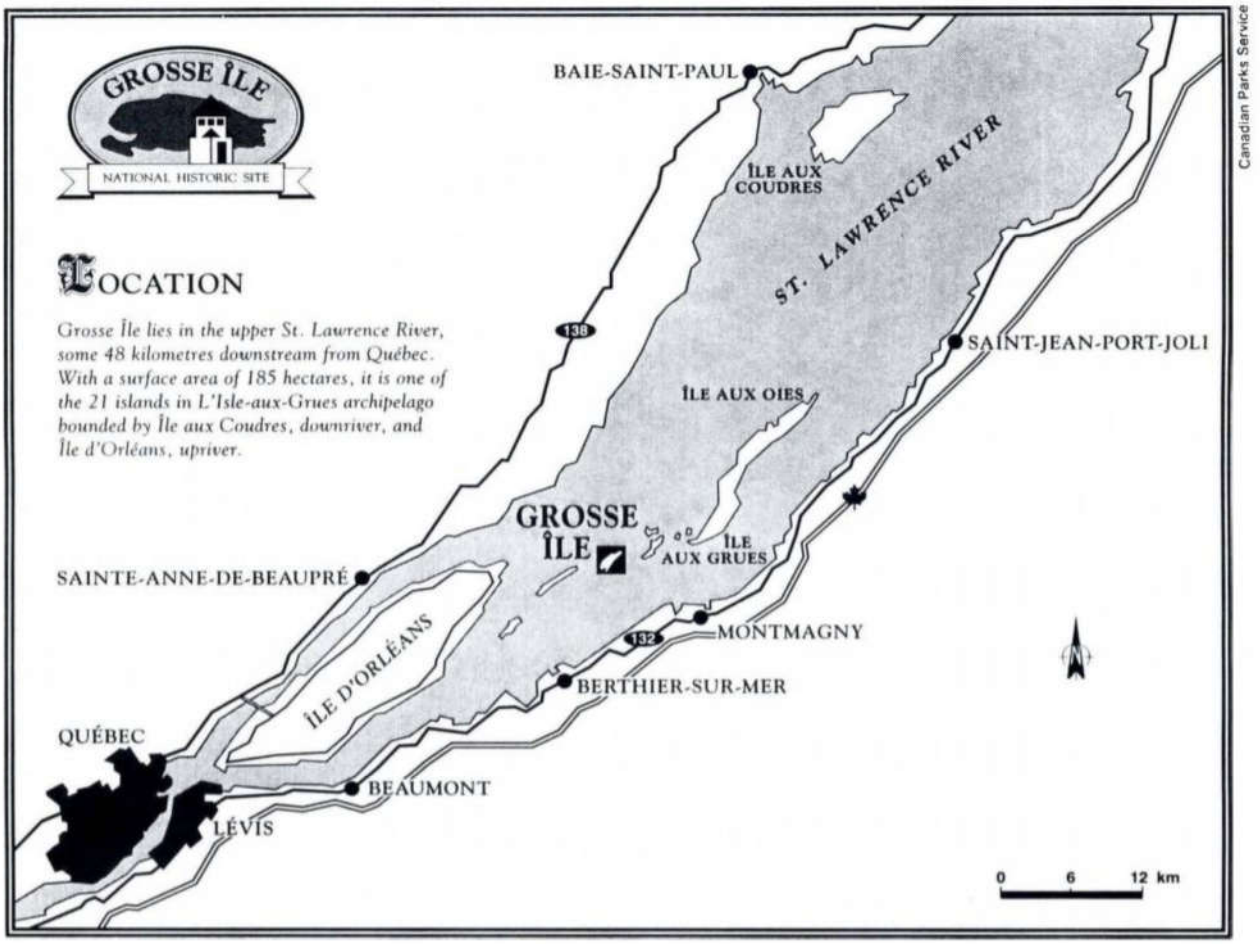


non-Irish) Canadian opinion behind the Grosse-Ile protests. When I spoke to him, Quigley, who has a doctorate in Irish history, was eager to defend the historical integrity of Action Grosse Ile's presentation to the Parks Service hearing.

In its public statements, Action Grosse-Ile argues not only that Grosse-Ile must be a memorial to the Irish dead (and to the Canadians who tried to help the dying and the orphaned). It also insists that historical accuracy demands that the Grosse-Ile historic site must explicitly link the deaths of the Irish refugees to "the genocidal outcomes" of British policy in Ireland and to British colonial misrule in general. That viewpoint would be controversial in Ireland itself. It would be welcomed by Irish nationalists, Sinn Fein, and presumably the IRA. But the Irish historical mainstream today rejects what distinguished economic historian Cormac O'Grada calls "the genocide theories formerly espoused by a few nationalist historians." In other words, Action Grosse-Ile has been seeking to persuade the Canadian Parks Service to accept historical views about Ireland that are now considered extreme in Ireland itself.

The Canadian Parks Service is most unlikely to do that. It still has its own agenda for Grosse-Ile, and so far the theme of immigration remains at the top. At the hearings of April 1993, the Service warmly acknowledged the Irishness of Grosse-Ile and the importance of what happened to the Irish there. Tony Bull, who chaired the hearings, hopes the discussion can now be less polarized. "We listened and we valued what we heard and we did learn a lot." But so far, the Parks Service has not been shaken from its long-established plan to keep immigration in general, not the Irish deaths on Grosse-Ile, as the focal point of its plans for the island.

Michael Quigley predicts that will continue to be unacceptable to Irish-Canadians in general. "The Irish have taken an interest in this that really is distinct. It runs across all the political sectarian lines that normally exist. This one struck a nerve."

The Medical Officers' Monument and the Irish Cemetery, Grosse-Ile.

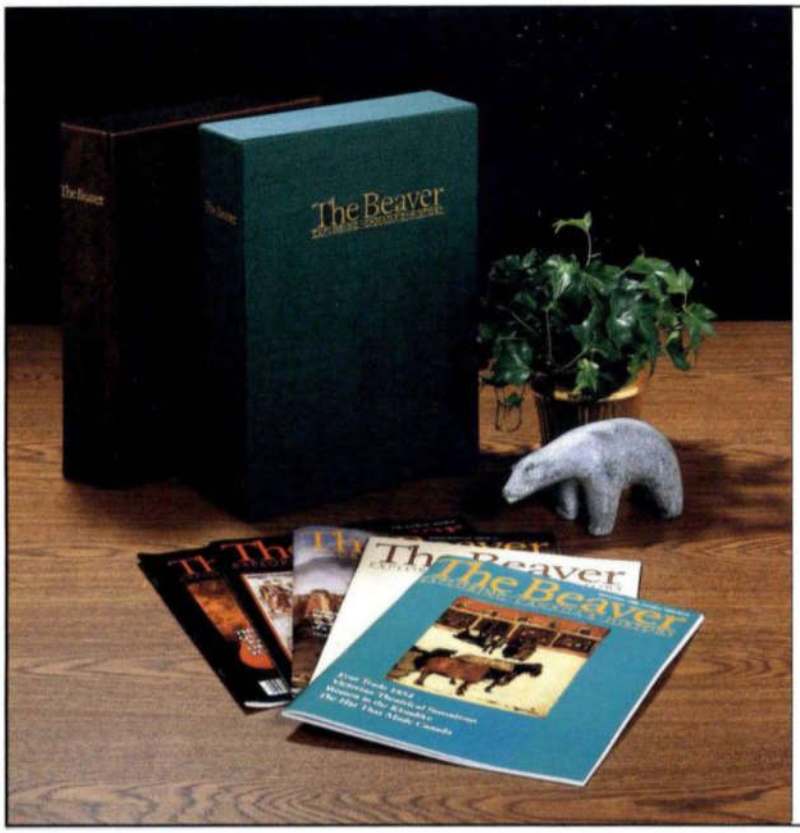
Would many Canadians go to a beautiful but not particularly accessible island (already the boat trip costs $100 for a family of four) to explore the theme of Canadian immigration, as the Parks Service intends? Somewhere between 20 and 50 million people in North America are said to have Irish connections, and many care deeply about them. The Irish-Canadians may be right to suggest that, even on a practical level, Grosse-Ile could have more drawing power as a place of Irish commemoration.

But the part of the Grosse-Ile hearings that I attended in Toronto in April 1993 was not much about the practicalities of how to draw visitors to the island. It was more impressive than that, and more moving. Whatever the machinations of institutions on either side, real caring and concern was unmistakeable. As Tony Bull put it, "this is certainly a groundswell of people passionately interested in their past."

Eventually the Historic Sites and Monuments Board will have to recommend how Grosse-Ile should be interpreted. Might the Parks Service drop its plans to commemorate immigration there? And if it did, would organizations like Action Grosse-Ile cease to insist on anti-British messages there?

Irish site? Immigration site? National historic site? It does not look like being a simple decision.♦

Christopher Moore was a Parks Canada researcher in the early 1970s. He is about one-quarter Irish.



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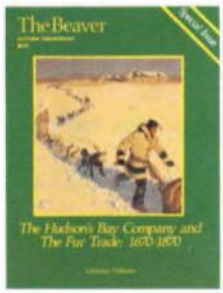

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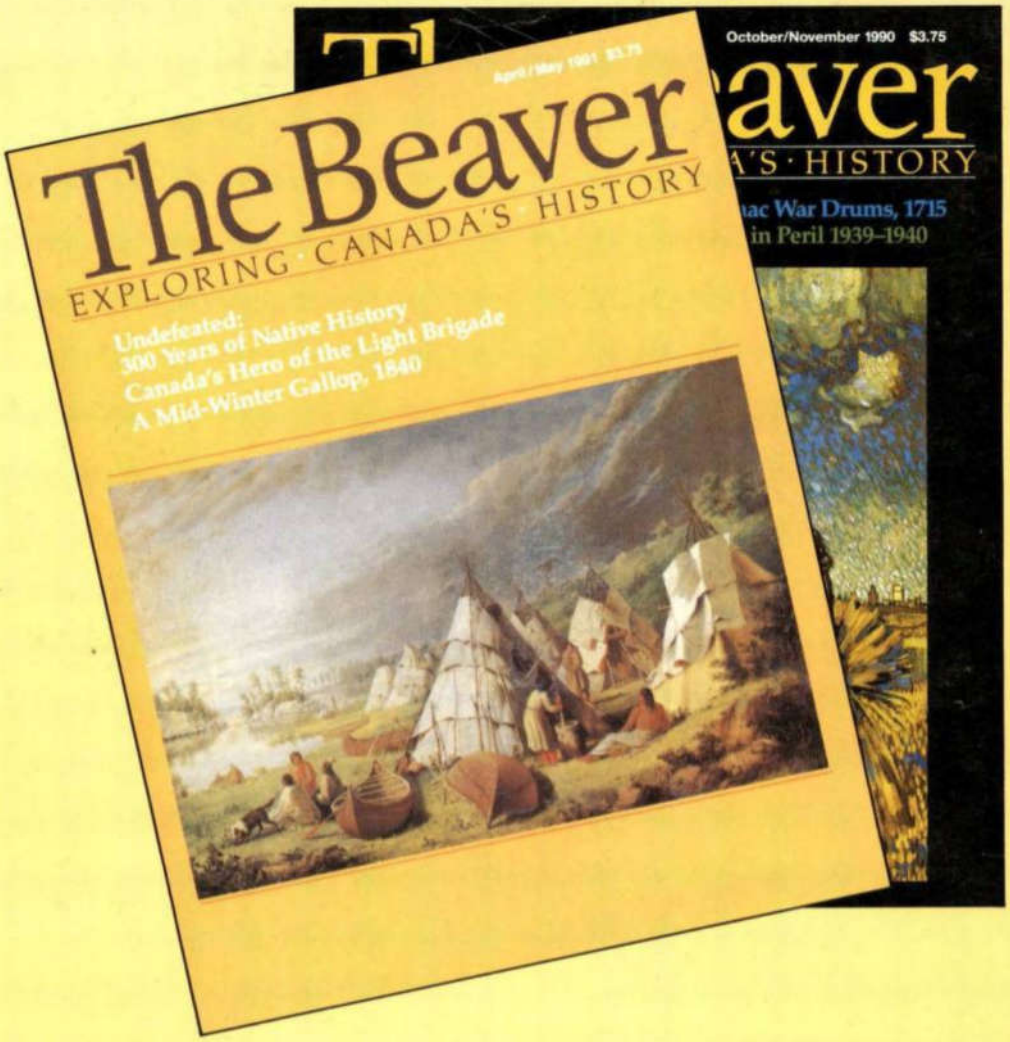

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